

How to learn quotes

Maximising your chances of success in the examination

What can affect your ability to remember something?

- distractions
- time of day
- your comfort level
- stress
- your interest in the material
- your level of motivation

Can you remember...

- The correct colour combination in a rainbow?
- The correct order of the planets?
- Which months have 31 days in them?
- Whether the clocks go forward/backward in spring/autumn?
- Spell 'rhythm' correctly without looking?

1. Don't try to remember too many at once

- Pick out five quotes at a time to work on. Trying to memorise too many all at once is going to addle your brain. As your first five choose the ones you mostly likely to come back to and use time and again – basically the most important ones.

2. Categorise your quotes/facts

- This will help you to group together key words and ideas and make you more likely to remember chunks of quotes

3. Make an index card for each quote

- A favourite revision method for memorising facts and information is using index cards
- Once you've got them, write your quote on one side. On the other side write the key words from your quote. So, for the quote from *The Tempest* I used above pick out these words: we, stuff, dreams, made, little, life, rounded, sleep.
- When you first start trying to memorise the quote look at the side with the full quote on and read it out loud to yourself several times. Then, flip the card over and use the key words to prompt your memory. Finally, hide the card and see if you can still remember it.
- You can carry your index cards around with you for the quotes you're currently focusing on and if you get a quiet moment e.g. on the school bus or while you're waiting for a lesson to start you can quickly go over them.

4. Make sticky notes and stick them where you'll see them

- Many people swear by this. You can stick them above your desk, on the back of the loo door, around the mirror where you do your hair and make-up or on the fridge door. Read over them whenever you see them.
- I just want to issue a word of warning with this revision technique though.... Often when things are on the walls in your environment you stop noticing them. Are there pictures on the wall in your bedroom that you haven't looked at properly in ages? Just beware of becoming immune to your sticky notes because they've blended into your environment.

5. Draw cartoons or sketches to help you remember

- If you're a visual learner drawing pictures, cartoons or dingbats to help you remember will probably help.

6. Act them out

- If you're a kinesthetic learner (someone who learns by doing) then act out the quote. Get into character and 'be' the person saying that quote.
- Alternatively, you could come up with an action for each of the key words.

. Read, cover, say and write

- A lot of learning can be done by reading out loud, covering up the information and then saying it as you write it out again and again and again.

8. Analyse each quote

- You're memorising these quotes to support your arguments in English essays. That means you've got to know what they signify and mean. To help you with this write the quote in the middle of a piece of paper and create a mind map where you're brainstorming everything you can think of about the quote. For example:
- What it says about the character
- How it demonstrates or expands on a theme in the text
- The use of language in the quote
- The rhythm, meter, rhyme or other plays with language such as assonance, alliteration or sibilance and what this says about the affect the writer was trying to achieve
- Understanding is the very first step to remembering so this is important stuff – and it will also help you to access higher marks in your exam.

10. Little and often

- Whatever you do, don't sit down one Saturday morning with the target of learning 100 quotes in six hours. That ain't ever going to work!
- Instead, focus on one quote for 3-5 minutes at a time up to five times per day. This way your subconscious mind will have time to absorb the information. You'll be amazed at how well you can remember a quote that you started learning two hours ago if you have a break in between!

11. Start early

- Start to memorise quotes as early as possible so you've got time to learn five quotes per week using the little and often method. Whatever you do, don't leave it until the day before the exam to start learning them!

12. Rinse and repeat

- When you've learnt a quote keep going back to it to remind yourself of it. So, don't learn a quote this week and then forget about it until the week of the exam. Instead, make sure you read it through 2-3 times per week to keep it fresh in your memory.