# RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

*The Master Guide to Active Testing and Long-Term Memory*

## WHAT IT IS

Forcing your brain to recall information without looking at your notes. Rather than passively re-reading textbooks (which creates an illusion of competence), retrieval practice strengthens neural pathways by pulling facts directly from memory.

## HOW TO DO IT: 4-STEP RETRIEVAL SYSTEM

- **1. PREPARE THE PROMPT:** Select a specific topic, past paper question, or key term list. Close all textbooks and exercise books so you have zero reference material in front of you.
- **2. ACTIVE RECALL SPRINT:** Write down everything you can possibly remember on a blank sheet of paper or whiteboard. Push your brain to retrieve definitions, dates, formulas, or key arguments.
- **3. CHECK AND CORRECT:** Open your notes and use a different coloured pen (e.g., red or green) to tick what you got right and fill in any missing details or correct errors.
- **4. REPEAT AND SPACE:** Re-test yourself on the corrected areas after a few days to ensure the knowledge moves permanently into your long-term memory schema.

# BRAIN DUMPS

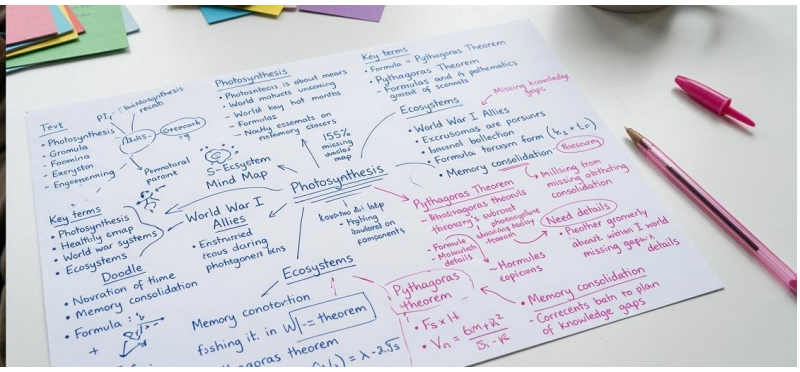
*The 5-Minute Knowledge Splat for Rapid Recall & Gap Analysis*

## WHAT IT IS

A high-intensity, timed retrieval exercise where you write down everything you know about a topic on a blank piece of paper in 5 minutes. It immediately reveals what is securely in your memory versus what you have forgotten.

## HOW TO DO IT: 5-MINUTE KNOWLEDGE SPLAT

- **1. BLANK SLATE:** Take a completely blank piece of paper or open a blank digital doc. Write the topic title at the top (e.g., 'Cell Biology' or 'Causes of WWI').
- **2. 5-MINUTE TIMER:** Set a timer for exactly 5 minutes. Write down everything you know about the topic as fast as possible in bullet points, mind maps, or paragraphs. Do not stop to edit.
- **3. COLOUR-CODE CHECK:** Grab your notes and a different coloured pen (e.g., green or pink). Tick accurate points, add missing keywords, and correct any misconceptions.
- **4. TARGETED REVIEW:** Take the gaps you identified in your different-coloured pen and make flashcards or re-study those specific weak spots during your next revision session.




BRITTONS PLAYBOOKS