STEP FOUR:

Making Revision Notes

Now you have created a 'bank' of source material on which your revision will be based and divided it into relevant sections of the syllabus, you have to revisit and interact with this information so that you can organise it into 'digestible' chunks. It's time to make some revision notes.

Before you start, it is important to stress that note taking is not simply passively copying out large chunks of the information you have selected to revise! It should be creative, involve decision-making and can be fun!

Below are some tips for making good revision notes:

- Notes are for you, no-one else. Therefore, you can personalize them however you wish, using any technique that helps you to understand and remember the information e.g. using different colour pens/highlighters for different subjects.

- Notes should be brief – concentrating only on key ideas, issues, facts, names, & dates.

- Never write in full sentences – use only phrases, cutting out verbs, prepositions etc... Use abbreviations wherever possible.

  For example

  <u>English Lit. P1</u>

  Mice & Men - ?s (*questions*) about LONELY characters:

  Lenny + George not lonely = got each other
  Charley's wife lonely = only woman on rch (*ranch*)

- Always put a title and name of source on your notes.

- Make use of headings and sub-headings to group information – relate to questions you may be asked about the material (see example above).

- Break information down into 'digestible' pieces

For example

The number 01044760716253

is easier to memorize if broken down into its constituent parts:

010 447 60 716253

...and even easier if each sub-group is labeled with a suitable heading:

010	=	international dialing code
447	=	France
60	=	Paris
716253	=	person's number

- Use your own shorthand to save writing commonly used words – think text messaging!

For example

U	=	you	$\uparrow$	=	increase
2	=	to	$\downarrow$	=	decrease
4	=	for	$\rightarrow$	=	leads to
NRG	=	energy	w	=	with
L8R	=	later	e.g.	=	for example
+	=	and	i.e.	=	that is

- Use colour as much as possible – your brain remembers better the things it sees in colour.

- Use colour to cross reference ideas which spread across topic.

- Use a variety of visual presentation techniques – again it is easier for the brain to remember information presented in this way. For example:
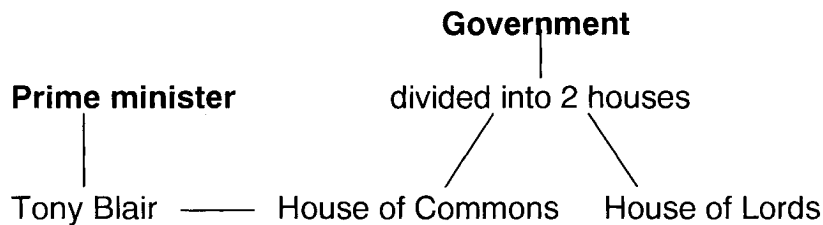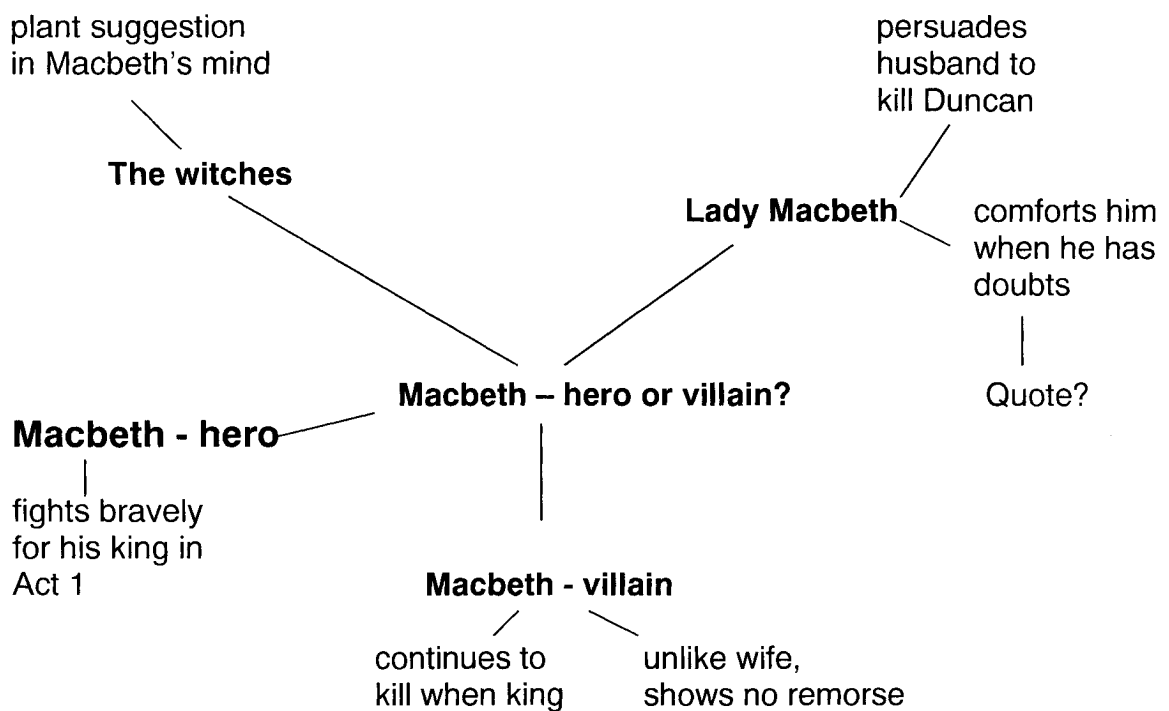
Flow charts

Study syllabus ⇒ Collect together all notes ⇒ Select useful sources ⇒ Divide into sections of syllabus ⇒ Make revision notes
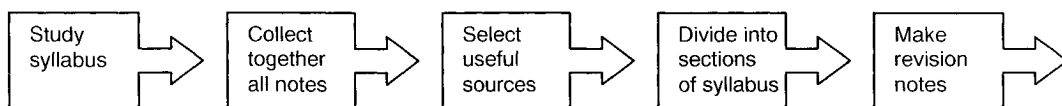
Timelines

1509	1533	1536	1540	1542
Catherine of Aragon	Catherine divorced for Anne Boylen	Anne beheaded Henry marries Jane Seymour	Jane dies Henry marries Catherine Howard	Catherine beheaded

Hook ups

Government

Prime minister   divided into 2 houses

Tony Blair ——— House of Commons   House of Lords

Mind maps

plant suggestion
in Macbeth's mind

persuades
husband to
kill Duncan

The witches

Lady Macbeth   comforts him
when he has
doubts

Macbeth – hero or villain?

Quote?

Macbeth - hero

fights bravely
for his king in
Act 1

Macbeth - villain

continues to   unlike wife,
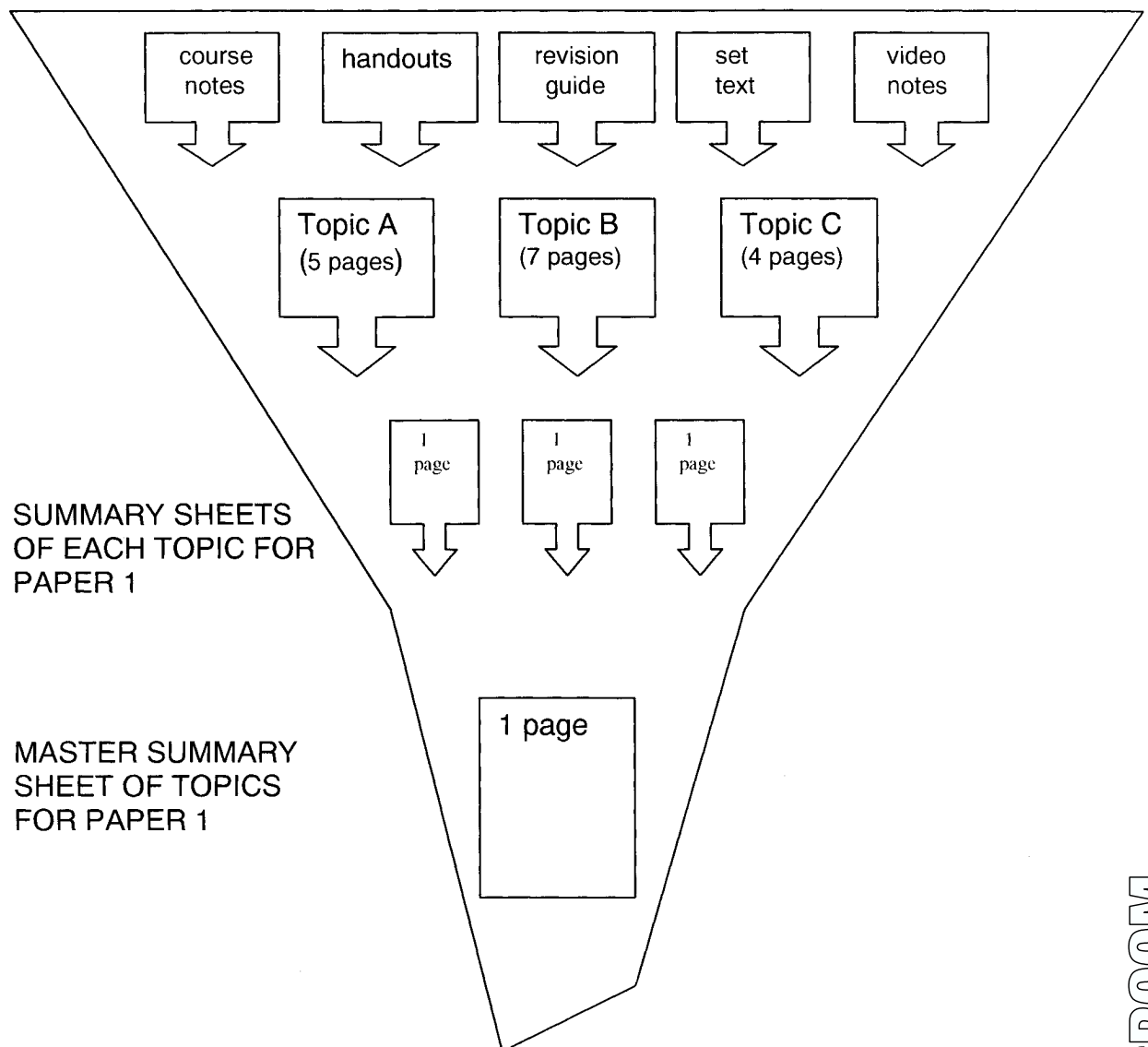kill when king   shows no remorse

CLASSROOM
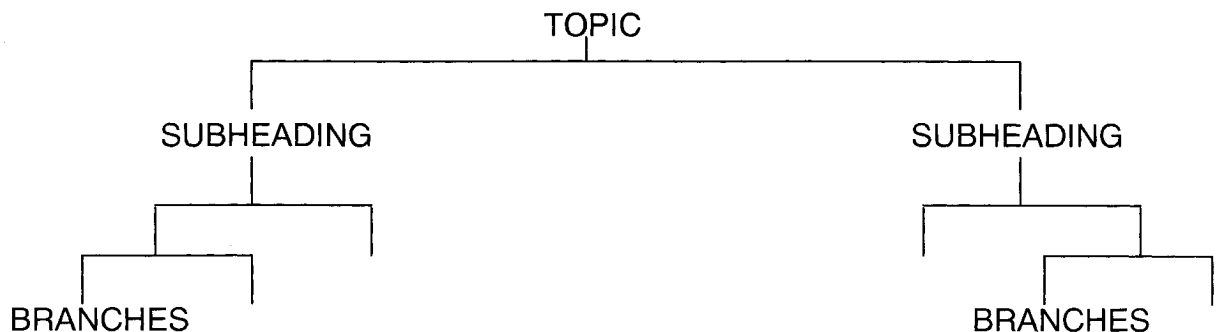resources

Making Summary Sheets

Having made your first set of revision notes, reduce them to a single summary sheet (index cards or postcards are easy to carry around with you), which just contain headings, key points and main arguments. At each stage you are distilling or filtering the information so that it is more concentrated. As you make decisions about what to keep and what to 'filter' out, you are interacting with the information and committing it to your long-term memory. Eventually a single word, fact, date, or phrase will bring back loads of other relevant information.

| course notes | handouts | revision guide | set text | video notes |

| Topic A (5 pages) | Topic B (7 pages) | Topic C (4 pages) |

| 1 page | 1 page | 1 page |

SUMMARY SHEETS OF EACH TOPIC FOR PAPER 1

MASTER SUMMARY SHEET OF TOPICS FOR PAPER 1

1 page

VISUAL STRATEGIES

- Draw diagrams or pictures that summarise information you may have written. The brain remembers pictures more easily and for longer periods than words. For example, a map could easily be used to summarise Hitler's invasion of territories that lead to the outbreak of WW2.

- Create mental pictures/associations. For example, one way to remember the spelling of the often mis-spelled word peasants, is to break it into two separate words – 'peas' and 'ants' and visualise an ant carrying a pea back to its nest. Every time you come to write the word you'll remember the mental picture you created and spell the word correctly! You can use the same approach when remembering larger events/processes in other subjects.

- Write out information as a list, like a shopping list, and visualise it (photographic memory!)

- Convert your notes into diagrammatic form (e.g. mind maps) if they are written in script form. This will help you to see and understand the connections between pieces of information. Below are some note layouts:

A family tree style diagram

TOPIC

SUBHEADING

SUBHEADING

BRANCHES

BRANCHES

Taking a line for a walk

IMPORTANT EVENTS

SUBJECT