Parent Guide to Effective Revision

Revision: Key Principles

A lot of research has been done recently on the most effective study strategies. The main four are listed and briefly explained below:

1. **Retrieval Practice**: this is retrieving knowledge from memory, without any cues.
2. **Spacing**: this is leaving a gap between learning information and revisiting it.
3. **Elaboration**: this is using ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions to explain our learning.
4. **Dual-coding**: this is using images to help remember our learning.

There is also research showing that **teaching** and **self-explaining** are very effective study strategies. Therefore, you can support your child by allowing them to ‘teach’ you key content!

Cornell Notes

Cornell Notes is a way of taking notes where students write key information and add cues (e.g. questions). They include a summary and a title. This method can be used when reading a text (lots of great revision articles on the British Library website) or watching a revision video. By writing ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, this strategy makes use of **elaboration**.

Title: Power in Macbeth	
Cues (questions)	Notes
What does usurpation means?	• Usurpation = taking a position of power that is not rightfully yours by force.
Why is Macbeth's usurpation particularly shocking?	• Macbeth breaks the Divine Rights of Kings when he kills King Duncan.
How does Banquo’s ghost usurp Macbeth at the banquet?	• Banquo’s ghost sits in Macbeth’s place (at the head of the banquet table), symbolising that Macbeth is not the rightful king and that Banquo’s children are prophesised to be kings.
Summary: Power is represented in Macbeth through different layers of usurpation, beginning with Macbeth wrongfully taking the position as king.	

Self-quizzing

Students can use their notes and key materials from lessons to self-quiz. This strategy makes use of **retrieval**. The process works in four steps:

Step one: students read the key information but speak aloud or write down ideas (e.g. their notes on animal and plant cells)

Step two: when they feel ready, and not before, students cover the information.

Step three: students write down everything they can remember (if using a page of Cornell notes, they can use the questions they have written as cues). This could include diagrams, alongside words.

Step four: students look back over the key information to see how well they remembered it. This is the most important stage as it is where they evaluate their learning. They should use a different colour pen (green) to fill in any gaps which become their focus for the next revision session.

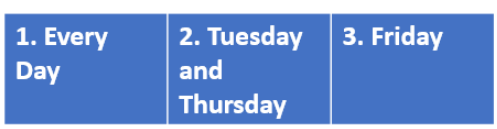
Step five: this process should be repeated to space out the retrieval of knowledge.

This self-quizzing process can be done in pairs with students questioning each other or with you questioning them.

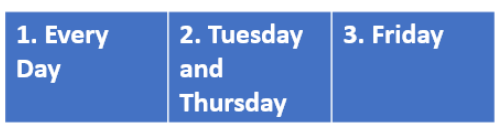
The Leitner Method

The Leitner Method is a way of quizzing with flashcards where students move the cards to different compartments depending on whether or not they recalled the information correctly. This strategy makes use of **retrieval** and **spacing**.

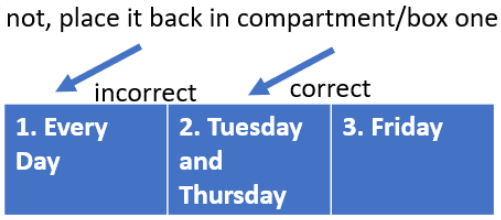
1. Split a box into 3 compartments and number them or have three separate numbered boxes:



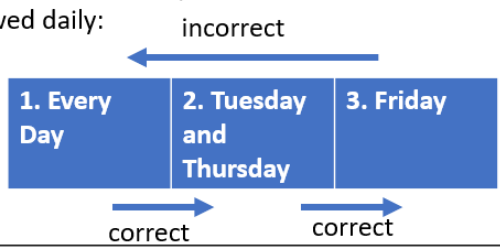
2. Place all your flashcards in compartment/box 1



3. Test on the flashcards in box one. If you recall the information, move the flashcard to compartment/box one. If not, place it back in compartment/box one



4. On Tuesday and Thursday (or every other day), test on boxes one and two. If you answer correctly, move the flashcard one box on. If incorrect, place the flashcard back in compartment/box one to be reviewed daily:



You can use this method with key vocabulary, key characters, key themes, key quotes or any factual knowledge.

Brain Dump/Knowledge Splat

A brain dump or knowledge splat is a very simple revision strategy involving ‘dumping’ or ‘splatting’ everything your child knows about a topic onto a black piece of paper. This strategy makes use of **retrieval** and works as shown below:

Step one: students choose what they want to revise (e.g. the process of osmosis)

Step two: students write down everything they can remember on this topic.

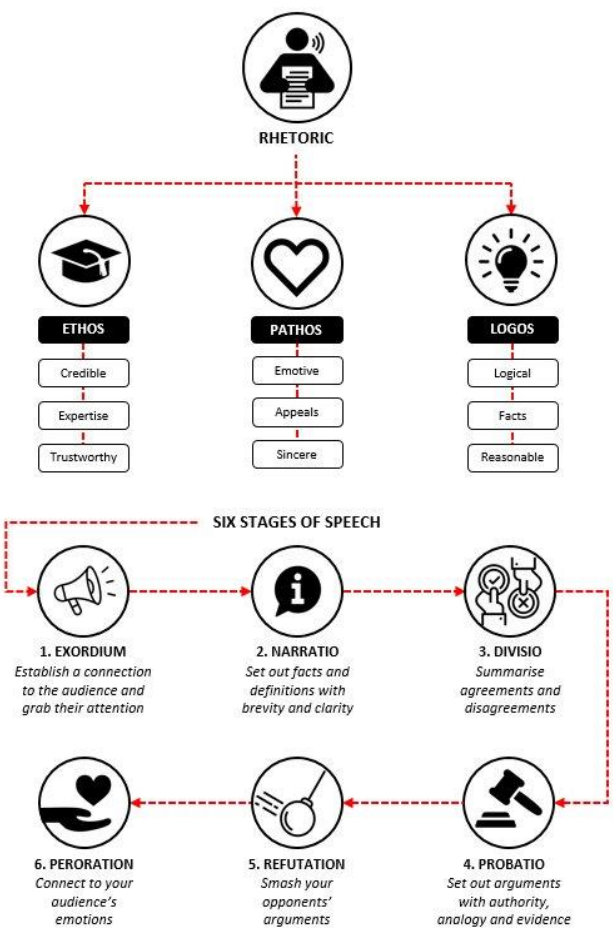
Step three: students look over lesson material to see how well they remembered the chosen topic and check any errors. This is the most important stage as it is where they evaluate their learning. They should use a different colour pen to fill in any gaps or make corrections which become their focus for the next revision session.

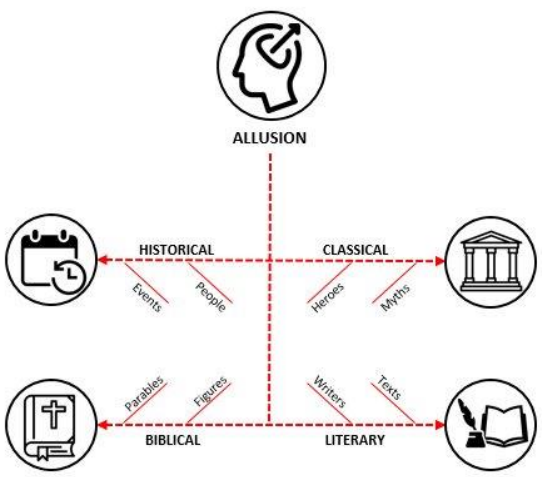
This can be applied to all subject areas.

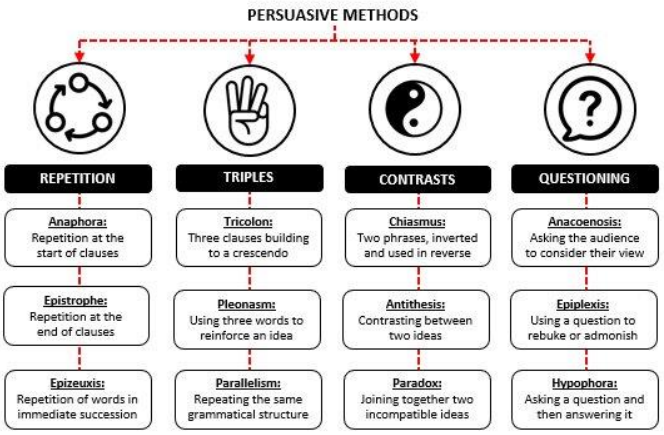
Dual-coding

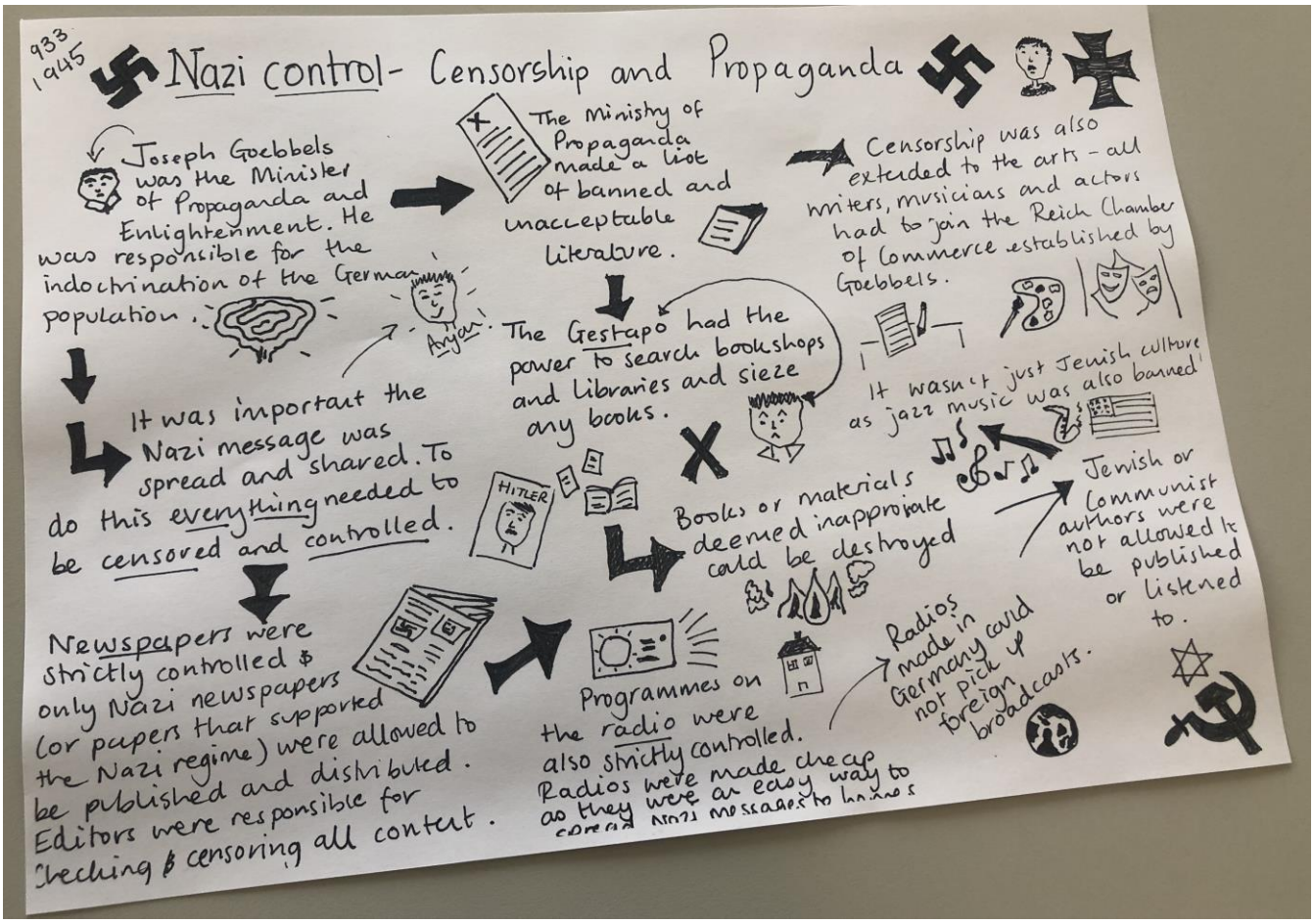
Dual-coding is where images are used to help remember important information. Studies show that when students create their own image to represent a vocabulary word, they are more likely to remember it. Students could include simple images on flashcards and use these to test themselves on key vocabulary words or quotes.

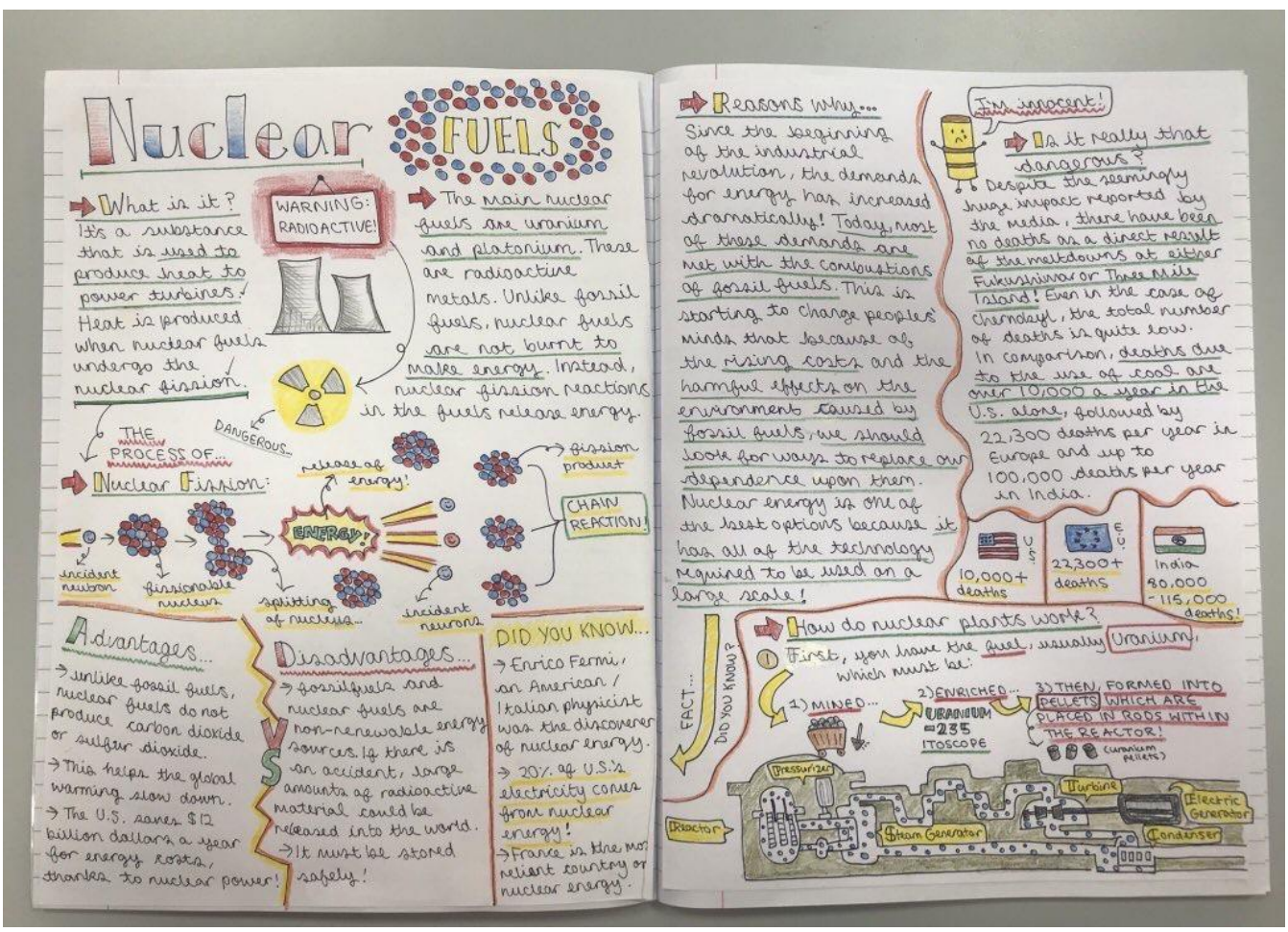
For example, students could use the images below to self-quiz on rhetoric by covering up the written information:








933-1945
Nazi control- Censorship and Propaganda
Joseph Goebbels was the Minister of Propaganda and Enlightenment. He was responsible for the indoctrination of the German population.
The Ministry of Propaganda made a list of banned and unacceptable literature.
Censorship was also extended to the arts - all writers, musicians and actors had to join the Reich Chamber of Commerce established by Goebbels.
Aryan
The Gestapo had the power to search bookshops and libraries and sieze any books.
It was important the Nazi message was spread and shared. To do this everything needed to be censored and controlled.
It wasn't just Jewish culture as jazz music was also banned!
HITLER
Books or materials deemed inappropriate could be destroyed
Jewish or Communist authors were not allowed to be published or listened to.
Newspapers were strictly controlled & only Nazi newspapers (or papers that supported the Nazi regime) were allowed to be published and distributed. Editors were responsible for checking & censoring all content.
Programmes on the radio were also strictly controlled. Radios were made cheap as they were an easy way to
Radios made in Germany could not pick up foreign broadcasts.


Nuclear FUELS
What is it?
It's a substance that is used to produce heat to power turbines. Heat is produced when nuclear fuels undergo the nuclear fission.
WARNING: RADIOACTIVE!
The main nuclear fuels are uranium and plutonium. These are radioactive metals. Unlike fossil fuels, nuclear fuels are not burnt to make energy. Instead, nuclear fission reactions in the fuels release energy.
DANGEROUS
THE PROCESS OF...
Nuclear Fission:
release of energy!
fission product
CHAIN REACTION
ENERGY!
incident neutron
fissionable nucleus
splitting of nucleus...
incident neutrons
Advantages...
→ unlike fossil fuels, nuclear fuels do not produce carbon dioxide or sulfur dioxide.
→ This helps the global warming slow down.
→ The U.S. saves $12 billion dollars a year for energy costs, thanks to nuclear power!
VS
Disadvantages...
→ fossil fuels and nuclear fuels are non-renewable energy sources. If there is an accident, large amounts of radioactive material could be released into the world.
→ It must be stored safely!
DID YOU KNOW...
→ Enrico Fermi, an American / Italian physicist was the discoverer of nuclear energy.
→ 20% of U.S.'s electricity comes from nuclear energy!
→ France is the most reliant country on nuclear energy.
Reasons why...
Since the beginning of the industrial revolution, the demands for energy has increased dramatically! Today, most of these demands are met with the combustions of fossil fuels. This is starting to change peoples' minds that because of the rising costs and the harmful effects on the environment caused by fossil fuels, we should look for ways to replace our dependence upon them. Nuclear energy is one of the best options because it has all of the technology required to be used on a large scale!
I'm innocent!
Is it really that dangerous?
Despite the seemingly huge impact reported by the media, there have been no deaths as a direct result of the meltdowns at either Fukushima or Three Mile Island! Even in the case of Chernobyl, the total number of deaths is quite low. In comparison, deaths due to the use of coal are over 10,000 a year in the U.S. alone, followed by 22,300 deaths per year in Europe and up to 100,000 deaths per year in India.
U.S. 10,000+ deaths
E.U. 22,300+ deaths
India 80,000 - 115,000 deaths!
How do nuclear plants work?
1) First, you have the fuel, usually Uranium, which must be:
1) MINED...
2) ENRICHED... URANIUM -235 ISOTOPE
3) THEN, FORMED INTO PELLETS WHICH ARE PLACED IN RODS WITHIN THE REACTOR!
FACT...
DID YOU KNOW?
Pressurizer
Turbine
Electric Generator
Reactor
Steam Generator
Condenser

Elaboration

Elaboration is showing understanding of a topic by answering ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions.

Below are some sentence stems students could use to practise this:

- How does X work?
- Why does X happen?
- Why does it make sense that _____?
- Why is this true?
- Why is X true and not Y?
- When did X happen?
- What caused X?
- What is the result of X?

This is also a great strategy for students to practise **self-explaining** by answering these questions. If they explain them to a partner, they would be **teaching** – another very effective revision tool.

Example:

Original (Good) The ancient Egyptians were masters of math. They created an innovative number system using seven symbols. Math strongly influenced the Egyptian way of life.

This short paragraph includes a clear main idea and a strong example to support it, but the paragraph leaves a lot of questions unanswered: Is there only one reason the Egyptians were masters at math? What was so innovative about the number system? How exactly did math influence Egyptian life? The main idea needs more support.

First Revision (Better) The ancient Egyptians were masters of math. They created an innovative number system using seven symbols. The system allowed them to do geometry and advanced calculations. Math strongly influenced the Egyptian way of life.

The writer added more evidence of the Egyptians' math expertise. However, the support is still sparse. The writer can strengthen the ideas by elaborating existing details.

Second Revision (Best) The ancient Egyptians were masters of math. They created an innovative number system using seven symbols. Each symbol was assigned a value, which allowed the Egyptians to add, subtract, multiply, and divide as well as count into the millions. The system allowed them to do geometry and advanced calculations. They used these math techniques to plot farmland, trade effectively, and construct precise pyramids. Math strongly influenced the Egyptian way of life.

Elaboration makes the ideas more complete. Notice how each new detail explains or expands upon the idea that comes before it.

Metacognition

Metacognition is thinking about thinking and students do this when they know how and when to use particular strategies in their learning. For example, they might use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast two different poems or themes before writing a paragraph that explores these similarities and differences.

Metacognition also involves students being able to reflect on a revision session and identify their strengths and areas to improve in future sessions.

Below are some questions students might ask themselves before, during and after a revision session:

Planning Stage	Monitoring Stage	Evaluating Stage
• How have we completed this question/solved this problem before and was it successful? Why/why not? • What is the best strategy? • What key terminology should I include? • How can I construct the best opening sentence? • What is the best way to begin? • What is the most logical order for my points? • What have I learned from in-class models and examples about this type of question?'	• Am I doing well so far? How do I know? • What other strategies or techniques might I include to improve my work so far? • Am I finding this easy or difficult? Why? • Could I stop and change/add/take away anything to improve my work so far?'	• How did I do? • Did X strategy/technique work? Why/why not? • How could I answer this question better/solve this problem more effectively next time? • Are there any strategies or techniques that may be better? • Did I include enough/the right terminology? • Where did I take a risk and how? Did this pay off? • Which part am I most proud of and why?

At the end of a revision session, students should make a brief note of what went well and targets to address in the next study session.

We also ask that parents sit with their child to complete the monitoring discussion, self evaluation and generic target sheets at the back of the planners once monitoring is received. They should sign the bottom along with their child.

The Illusion of Knowing

Studies show that students often think they know and can remember knowledge but then forget it in a test.

To avoid this, students should:

1. Test themselves after a delay.
2. Rate the likelihood they have answered correctly.

Testing after a delay:

Students might, for example, read a text on Macbeth then revise a different topic or subject area. They then write down the key information or a summary of the Macbeth text, without looking back at the text. They should then check their answers against the text and make a note of what they did not remember.

This can be applied to all subject areas.

Rating answers:

Students might do some flashcard practice on key vocabulary words. They might then write down ten of the key words and give themselves a rating between 0 and 100 for how likely they are to get the answer correct. For example, if they immediately answered the flashcard on regicide correctly as ‘killing of a king’, they might rate this 100; if they hesitated with a word, they might rate this 60 and if they couldn’t answer, they might rate this 0. This rating process ensures students spend more time on revising words they are less confident with.

Again, this can be applied to other subjects.

Putting everything into practice

Most of this booklet has been about revising and remembering key knowledge but, at some stage students will of course need to answer exam questions. A revision session, therefore, should start with some note-taking and/or self-quizzing but then use this knowledge recap to write sentences, paragraphs or full essays.

This is where they think carefully about crafting, incorporating key vocabulary and knowledge into their writing.

Exam question: How is power explored in Macbeth?

*Macbeth, the **usurping** tragic hero, defies the **Divine Rights of Kings** when he obtains power through **regicide**, questioning '**will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood clean from my hands**?'*

*The **classical allusion** to the Greek God of the sea creates a **hyperbolic phrase**, symbolising the great extent of Macbeth's guilt which even a divine ocean of water cannot remove. **Hands is a recurring motif** signifying guilt associated with power obtained through corrupt means and its **ramifications**. This is also seen later in the play when…*

Before writing this paragraph, students might:

- Use The Leitner Method to quiz on the meaning of 'usurp', 'regicide', 'hyperbole', 'ramification' and different types of allusions.
- Complete a Brain Dump on context in Macbeth (Divine Rights of Kings).
- Used Cornell Notes to self-quiz on the motif of hands on Macbeth.