

# FLASHCARDS



## You will need...

- Flashcards
- Colour pens/textas
- Rubber bands to hold them together
- Something to store them in; a shoebox or plastic storage box is fine.
- A glue stick is useful
- A filing system so you can find a group of cards relating to a specific topic/subject easily.

OR

Flashcard App on your phone or tablet

## HOW TO USE THEM:

### Step 1:

Obtain some flashcards. It's not essential that they are CARDS as such, but cards last longer than paper. I find index cards work well. Check these out from Office Works:

<http://www.officeworks.com.au/shop/officeworks/p/esselte-system-cards-102mm-x-152mm-assorted-colours-500-pack-es451205>

The other benefit of Index cars is that they have all sorts of cool accessories available like storage boxes and dividing cards. They also come in different colours, so you could use a different colour for a different subject or topic, making them easier to distinguish from each other.

There are two sizes of index cards available. The smaller ones (76 x127 milliletres) are generally fine for most subjects, but the bigger ones (127 x 203 millimetres can be more useful for the upper years in Maths, Physics and Chemistry, or for incorporating tables. Avoid the urge to cover the larger cards with writing. If there's a lot that doesn't seem to fit in the flashcard format, try spreading the information over several cards, or use mind maps instead (see chapter on mind maps in this book)

## Step 2:

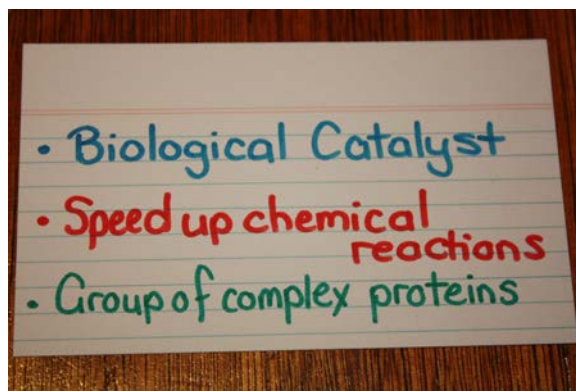
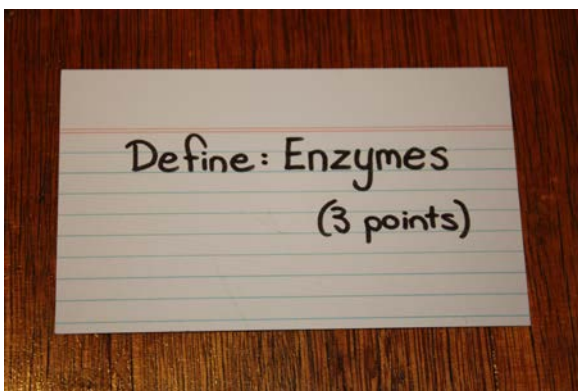
Get creative! Use colour pens or textas to create cards that will test your knowledge and trigger your memory when you step into tests and exams.

Look at the information you need to memorise. THINK: How can I best display this information so it will make an imprint into my long-term memory? And then: How can I make this interesting enough for me to be able to recall, place into my working memory and then file back again into my long-term memory?

**TIP:** You can scan or copy information from your textbook or download and print diagrams from the Internet and paste them onto your cards if it presents the information more simply.

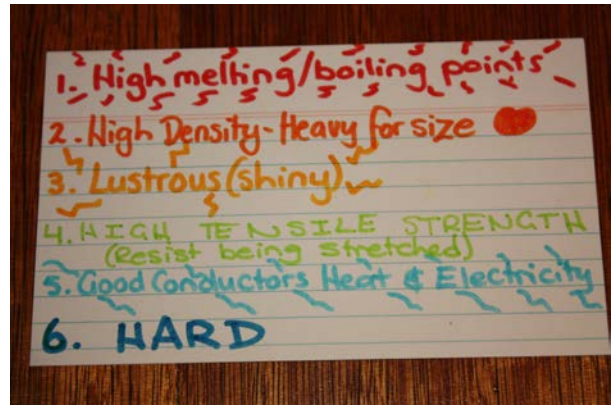
Flashcards work on a very simple principle: a simple hint, trigger or word on one side, then the information you need to learn or memorise on the other side. This enables you to test yourself and wire the pathways through your brain. Here are some examples:

### Definitions



- Use dot points for phrases or words ONLY.
- Avoid using sentences or paragraphs that are difficult to memorise. You want to understand and focus on the CONCEPT, not the whole sentence.
- If there are several dot points, write the number on the front as shown above so you know how many points you need to remember.

## Properties of something



- Notice the use of colour on the flip side of the card. This will help you to VISUALISE the answers, as well as making them look pretty!
- The words are also written in a way that resembles each property, also enhancing memory.

## Vocabulary for foreign languages



Languages using different script can be either printed and pasted onto the cards or handwritten on.

## Grammar Rules and examples (Foreign languages AND English)

Verb: Parler (to speak) Conjugating Verbs

Regular -er Verb Endings						
Tense (stem)	je	tu	il/elle/on	nous	vous	ils/elles
Present (parl)	-e	-es	-e	-ons	-ez	-ent
Imperfect (parl)	-ais	-ais	-ait	-ions	-iez	-aient
Future (parler)	-ai	-as	-a	-ons	-ez	-ont
Conditional (parler)	-ais	-ais	-ait	-ions	-iez	-aient
Subjunctive (parl)	-e	-es	-e	-ions	-iez	-ent

Regular -er Verb Endings						
Tense (stem)	je	tu	il/elle/on	nous	vous	ils/elles
Present (parl)						
Imperfect ( )						
Future ( )						
Conditional ( )						
Subjunctive ( )						

- These grammar rules were most easily displayed in a grammar table. This was then pasted onto a larger 127 x 203 millimetre card so it could all fit.
- In a test or exam you could quickly write the table down on scrap paper first whilst it's still fresh in your memory. You can then refer to the table throughout your test.

## Using tables of information

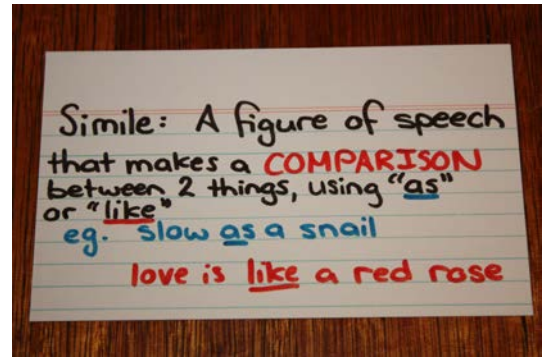
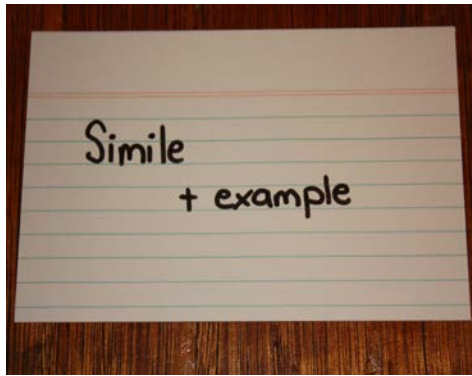
Name of Tissue	Consists of...	Main Functions
Epithelial tissue		
Connective tissue		
Skeletal tissue		
Blood tissue		
Nerve tissue		
Muscle tissue		

*Animal tissues (based on humans)*

Name of tissue	What it consists of	Main functions
Epithelial tissue	Sheets of cells	To line tubes and organs and form the skin
Connective tissue	Tough fibrous fibres	To bind and connect tissues together
Skeletal tissue	Hard material	To support and protect the body and permit movement
Blood tissue	Starry fluid containing blood cells	To carry oxygen and food substances round the body
Nerve tissue	Network of threads with long extensions	To conduct and co-ordinate messages
Muscle tissue	Bundles of elongated cells	To bring about movement

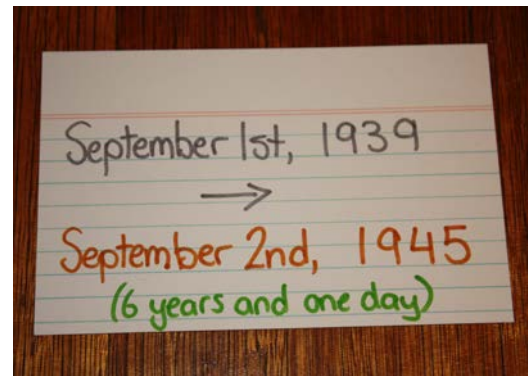
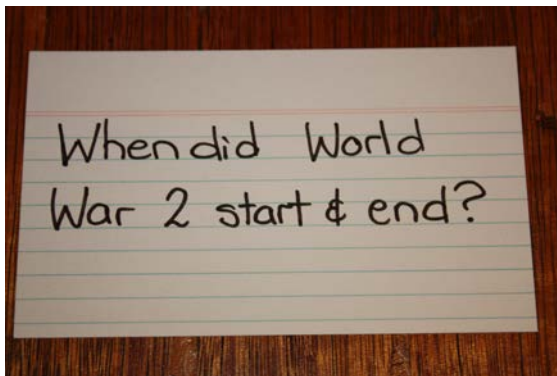
- Here's another example of using tables on flashcards. The information has been deleted from the blank table for you to practice filling in.
- You could also use an acronym or mnemonic to remember the order of the tissues so you don't forget one.

## Literary and Writing Techniques



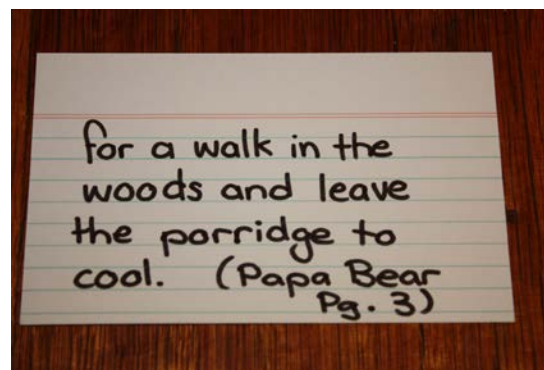
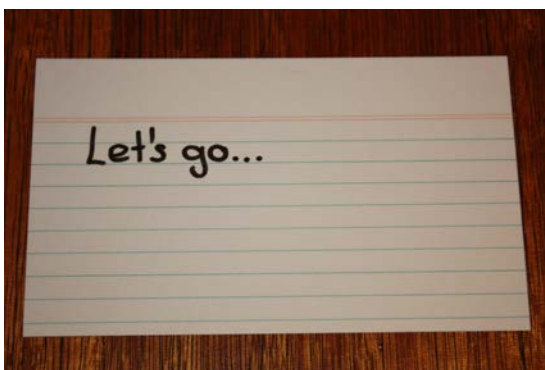
- This card uses a definition followed by an example so you can associate one with the other for easy recall.
- Can be used for themes and techniques in poetry, novels, speeches, plays and advertising.

### Make your own pop quiz.



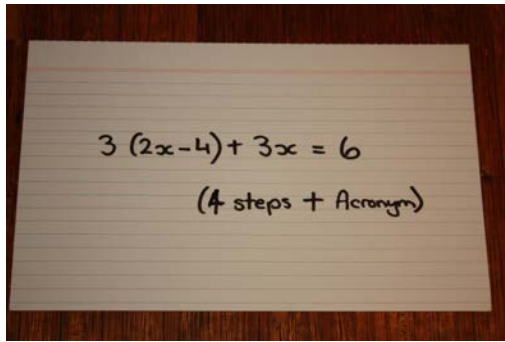
Write a question on your card and the answer on the other.

### Quotes for English novels

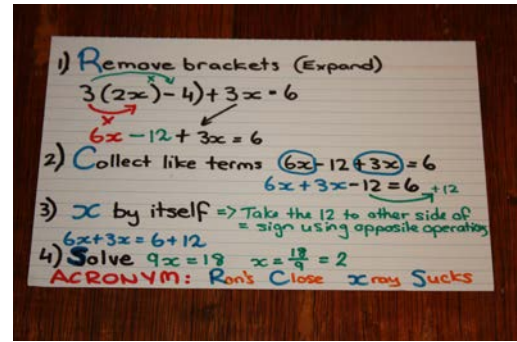


- The first few words of this quote have been written on one side of the card, the remainder of the quote is on the back.
- Use the first few words as a "trigger" for your memory to recall the rest of the quote.

## Maths Examples



$3(2x-4) + 3x = 6$   
(4 steps + Acronym)



1) Remove brackets (Expand)  
 $3(2x-4) + 3x = 6$   
 $6x - 12 + 3x = 6$

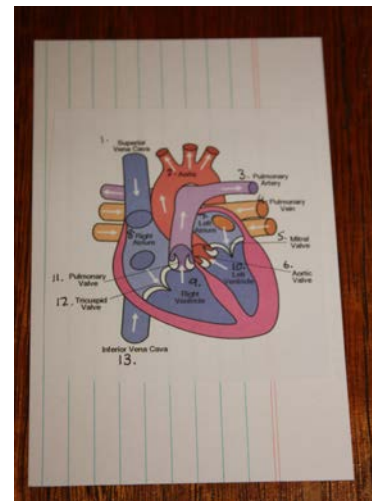
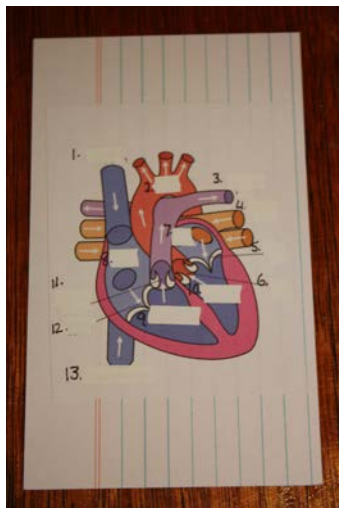
2) Collect like terms  
 $6x - 12 + 3x = 6$   
 $6x + 3x - 12 = 6 + 12$

3)  $x$  by itself  $\Rightarrow$  Take the 12 to other side of = sign using opposite operation  
 $6x + 3x = 6 + 12$

4) Solve  $9x = 18$   $x = \frac{18}{9} = 2$   
ACRONYM: Ron's Close X-ray Sucks

- Show the different steps involved in solving a maths question using different colours.
- Write the number of steps on the front and for some problems consider using an acronym or mnemonic to recall the order of the steps.

## Pictures and Diagrams



- This card has a diagram of the heart with the different parts of the heart whiteed out. The flip side of the card has all the parts labeled so you can check if you've got the answers right.

### Step 3:

LEARN the cards!!! For the best result, work them into your everyday life.

Flashcards are portable and quick. Test yourself on the bus going to school, see how many you can get through when the ads come on tv, or flick through some when you have 5 minutes until sports practice.

Make a pile of the cards you know and another of the ones you don't know yet. Don't worry if it takes a bit of time to memorise them; you'll be surprised how they will stick in your head if you practice them regularly.

Don't be afraid to rewrite cards you might be able to improve. Nothing is set in stone.

### Step 4:

Create a storage system. This might be a box that you can buy to match your flashcards, such as the file box that goes along with the index cards from Officeworks. Or it could be the box the flashcards actually came in, covered with contact. Or it could be a shoebox that you can decorate to suit your own personal style.

Either way, it's best to have a system to easily identify:

1. Each subject eg, Science, Geography, History
2. Each topic within that subject eg, Science-Biology/Physics/Chemistry/Geology
3. Sometimes sub-topics when they apply eg, Geography-Landforms-Erosion
4. Try marking cards with a dot in the top right hand corner to show different types of learning. Eg, blue dot for definitions, yellow dot for concepts, red dot for quotations

Play around and see what you can come up with. If you have a very creative idea, take a photo and email me at [beckyblake0@gmail.com](mailto:beckyblake0@gmail.com) to show me!

## FLASHCARD TIPS:

- Use Words and Phrases only. No Sentences
- Don't put too much information on one card. Split large chunks between several cards
- Write how many points you're expected to remember on the other side so you make sure you're covering all the information
- Factor in some time for frequent revision. It's all well and good to write the cards, but you then need to LEARN them!
- Although better than not doing anything the night before a test or exam, it's best to do flashcards as early in advance as possible. This benefits the way your memory works the most.
- When you've done your flashcards, try showing them to your teacher and make sure you've covered all the necessary information for the topic.
- Do flashcards and learn them as much as possible BEFORE doing any practice tests or exams. In that way, you know if you've left anything out and it gives you a good indication of where you are with your study.
- Try drawing small pictures or diagrams on to get an idea across. Don't worry if you're not Picasso! Stick figures are fine. As long as you know what they mean
- Flashcards don't need to be pretty or perfectly neat. They just need to make sense to YOU!

## FLASHCARD APPLICATIONS

There are plenty of flashcard applications available on your iPad or mobile phone. Some of them are free to download and are good for simple definitions and then you can add options onto them at additional costs. You can sort them into subjects and topics using tabs at the top.

Advantages of flashcards on your portable device are:

- You don't have to worry about losing your cardboard or paper cards
- They don't rip or fold or get stuff spilled on them
- They are with you pretty much all of the time for quick extra revision sessions
- You don't have to worry about filing and storing them safely
- They take up less room

There are some disadvantages of electronic flashcards:

- Check storage capabilities; you want to be able to store all your flashcards in one place
- It's hard to add your own creativity to electronic cards. Sometimes just writing it down yourself with pens and arrows is a better option with explaining rather than typing in your answer. It's almost therapeutic!
- Make sure you save them to an external memory device, hard drive or cloud system on a regular basis. There would be nothing worse than having all your flashcards for the year gone if you lose or damage your device. It happens!
- Colour is a great memory trigger. Check to see if the flashcards on your app allow you to use colour, otherwise black and white get a bit boring and monotonous

## BENEFITS OF FLASHCARDS:

- You are constantly testing yourself over a variety of subjects and topics
- They are fun to make (bring out your creative side with coloured pens and funky designs)
- Even when you're really tired and feel your brain is fried, it really doesn't take much energy to write ten new cards, or test yourself for ten minutes. Then you'll feel like you've achieved something, and this leads to feeling more motivated
- Flashcards help you develop a huge base/foundation knowledge
- Being 100% confident on simple definitions gives you a good "coat hanger" you can "hang" further knowledge on

The options for what you can do with flashcards and how you can use them are unlimited and restricted only by your imagination.

**REMEMBER:** There are no wrong ways to do flashcards. Give them a try. Experiment. Find your own system. Have fun!