**READING**

***Read the passage and choose the correct headings for parts A-E from the list of headings 1-7 below. There are two extra headings which you don’t need to use.***

**1) How to teach coping with exam stress**

## 2) Motivating students to start revision early

## 3) Practising effective revision strategies

**4) Procrastination issues**

## 5) Practising under exam conditions

## 6) Improving knowledge

## 7) Identifying topics that need attention

# PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT: WHY MOCK EXAMS ARE GREAT FOR STUDENTS’ BRAINS

Many students see sitting mocks as nothing more than a cruel trick. But these tests have more value than you might imagine – here’s why.

Here are five ways that can help students make sure they’re on the path to exam success:

## Heading A

Research [suggests that 75% of students consider themselves to be procrastinators](http://studiemetro.au.dk/fileadmin/www.studiemetro.au.dk/Procrastination_2.pdf)  with 50% doing so regularly and to a level that is considered a problem. The author of one of the biggest studies on procrastination, researcher Piers Steel, states that “the further away an event is, the less impact it has on people’s decisions.”

In essence, summer exams feel like a lifetime away for teenagers so some will only really start working hard for them after Easter. By having mock exams halfway through the year, students have the opportunity to focus their attention and effort earlier.

## Heading B

Some of the most commonly used techniques to aid revision are actually the least effective, including highlighting or re-reading key passages. One reason for their ineffectiveness is they do not force you to think deeply and critically about the topic, so they often end up being done on auto-pilot.

Mock exams let students practise revision strategies that are proven to be more helpful and discover what works best for them. There are several [memory strategies that have been found to be effective](http://www.innerdrive.co.uk/Release_Your_Inner_Drive/maximise-memory/). In one of the most [comprehensive reviews on memory](http://www.indiana.edu/~pcl/rgoldsto/courses/dunloskyimprovinglearning.pdf), researchers found that the following strategies are useful: spacing out revision sessions (so that there is enough time to forget and then re-learn); teaching the material to someone else (this forces you to think about the material in a clear and structured way); and switching between topics every now and then (which helps you build on previous revision sessions).

Another technique is what psychologists call “elaborative interrogation”. This is essentially asking yourself “why”. In a fascinating study on memory, [students were divided into three groups and asked to remember sentences such as “the hungry man got in his car”](https://www.wku.edu/senate/documents/improving_student_learning_dunlosky_2013.pdf). The first group just read the sentence. The second group was given an explanation (i.e. because he wanted to go to a restaurant), and the third group was asked to consider why he might have got in his car. The results? Students who were prompted to ask “why” remembered 72% of the sentences when tested later, compared to only 37% in the other two groups.

## Heading C

Testing yourself is an effective way to improve your knowledge and ability to recall information. In a [study on mock exams](http://learninglab.psych.purdue.edu/downloads/2006_Roediger_Karpicke_PsychSci.pdf), researchers found that students who did a practice test after a period of revision did better on the final exam than those students who didn’t do the mock exam and had just spent the whole time revising.

Instead of seeing an exam as a potentially threatening event or as some sort of judgement on their ability, it would be great if we could help students to see their mock exams as a handy way of improving their knowledge and memory.

Also, if students have a particularly bad mock exam, better to have the shock in the mock, than the final exam. It can act as a call to action that perhaps they need to do more work, change revision strategies and develop skills needed to perform under pressure.

## Heading D

Pressure can do funny things to students. For some, it can lead to nerves, anxiety, frustration and sloppy mistakes, culminating in a poor performance. For others, pressure allows them to concentrate more, work harder and perform better. It takes time and practice to perform well under pressure. If the final summer exams are the first time students experience these conditions, it is lottery as to how they react.

Mock exams are a great opportunity for students to figure out and practise what works best for them. Techniques to [manage exam nerves could include actively slowing down, channelling any nerves into helpful behaviour or listening to some relaxing music beforehand](http://www.innerdrive.co.uk/Release_Your_Inner_Drive/managing-exam-nerves/).

## Heading E

Doing mocks early enough in the year gives you time before the real thing to target areas that need improvement. Mock exam results can identify how best to spend the coming months for students.

Once these areas are identified, it is then a case of putting in the hours. It is not enough to think about what you need to do better, it is the action and the doing that really makes a difference.

Being comfortable and confident enough to ask someone else for help, be it a teacher, parent or carer, is a [big part of having a growth mindset](https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2015/nov/15/four-questions-encourage-growth-mindset-students). Mock exams can be used as a way of getting students to feel comfortable receiving feedback, which paves the way for further improvement and learning.

Mock exams, if framed right, can be incredibly beneficial for students. Helping them to see that is part of the challenge. They can help students to start revising early, to practise effective revision strategies, to improve their knowledge, to familiarise themselves with pressure, and act as a guide moving forward.

***Read the text and choose the correct option (a-c) to complete the sentences.***

**THE KING *Herself***

Today she is in the Royal Mummy Rooms at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, reunited at long last with her family of fellow pharaohs, with a sign saying she is Hatshepsut, the king herself (1479-1458 BC).

But in 1903, when the archeologist Howard Carter found Hatshepsut’s sarcophagus in the Valley of the Kings, it was empty. Had her mummy been stolen or destroyed? The truth only came out a century later when Egyptian scientist positively identified a mummy called KV60a, discovered more than a century earlier in a minor tomb, as that of Hatshepsut. None of the treasures normally found with pharaohs’ mummies were with it. It was not even in a coffin.

For Hatshepsut, a pharaoh who did not fear death as long as she was remembered, the irony is great. As one of the greatest builders in one of the greatest Egyptian dynasties, she raised numerous temples and shrines. She commissioned hundreds of statues of herself and left accounts in stone of her titles, her history, even her hopes and fears. Inscribed on an obelisk at Karnak are the words: ‘Now my heart turns this way and that, as I think what people will say. Those who see my monuments in years to come, and who shall speak of what I have done.’

But following her death, her successor and stepson Thutmose III set about erasing her memory, ordering all images of her as king to be removed from monuments and temples. At Deir el Bahri, at the temple designed to be the centre of Hatshepsut’s cult, her statues were shamed and thrown into a pit. Images of her as queen were left undisturbed, but wherever she proclaimed herself king, the destruction was careful and precise. Why?

Hatshepsut was the eldest daughter of Thutmose I and Queen Ahmose. But Thutmose had a son by another queen, and this son, Thutmose II, became pharaoh when his father died. As was common among Egyptian royalty, Thutmose II married his sister, Hatshepsut. They produced one daughter; another, less important wife, Isis, gave Thutmose II the male heir that he longed for, but Hatshepsut was unable to provide.

When Thutmose II died not long after from heart disease, his heir, Thutmose III, was still a young boy. As was the custom, Hatshepsut assumed control as the young pharaoh’s queen regent. And so began one of the most intriguing periods of ancient Egyptian history.

At first, Hatshepsut acted on her stepson’s behalf, respecting the convention that the queen should handle political affairs while the young king learnt the ropes. But before long, she began performing kingly functions, like making offerings to the gods. After a few years she assumed the role of ‘king’ of Egypt, supreme power in the land. Her stepson was relegated to second-in-command and the ‘king herself’ proceeded to rule for an amazing 21 years.

What caused Hatshepsut to break so radically with the traditional role of queen regent? A social or military crisis? A desire for power? A belief that she had the same right to rule as a man? No one really knows. Maybe she felt, as a direct descendant of the pharaoh Thutmose I, she had a greater claim to the divine line of pharaohs than Thutmose III. At first she made no secret of her sex – in images her body is unmistakably a woman’s – but later she is depicted as a male king, with headdress and beard, standing imposingly with legs apart.

Her hieroglyph inscriptions have frequent references to ‘my people’ which suggest that she knew she had broken with tradition and wanted her subjects’ approval. Whatever their opinion was, there is no doubting the frustration of the king in waiting, Thutmose III. After Hatshepsut’s death, he took his revenge, wiping his stepmother’s reign as pharaoh out of history. But in the long term it is she, the King Herself, who has achieved greater fame.

1. **Hatshepsut’s mummy was not identified at first because it:**a) was badly damaged.
b) was not in a royal tomb.
c) had another name with it.
2. **Hatshepsut was very worried that people would:**a) realize she was a woman.
b) not think she was royalty.
c) not remember her.
3. **Thutmose III did not want people to know that Hatshepsut had been:**a) king.
b) queen.
c) related to him.
4. **According to tradition, the queen regent was supposed to:**a) make offerings to the gods.
b) help until the king was ready.
c) be a politician.
5. **In later statues and images, Hatshepsut appears male from:**a) her body shape.
b) the way she stands.
c) her clothes.

KEY

# Practice makes perfect

A – 2

B – 3

C – 6

D – 5

E – 7

**The king herself**

1 – B

2 – C

3 – A

4 – B

5 – B