

Strategies for making the most out of Knowledge Organisers

The main benefit of knowledge organisers is that they give children, parents and teachers the 'bigger picture' of a topic, subject area or specific concepts. Some topics can be complicated, so having the essential knowledge, clear diagrams, explanations and key terms on one document can be really helpful.

Research shows that our brains remember things more efficiently when we know the 'bigger picture' and can see the way that chunks of knowledge within that subject area link, forming powerful schemas. Making links, essentially, helps information move into our long-term memory. As Ofsted's Sean Harford recently remarked, knowledge becomes 'sticky' – the more you know, the more you learn – which helps children gain a deeper understanding over time.

Another key benefit is their use for retrieval practice. Regular retrieval of knowledge helps us remember more effectively (Roediger *et al*, 2011). Again, it helps us store knowledge in, and recall it from, the long-term memory and frees up space in the working memory to take on new knowledge (Hirsch, [Why Knowledge Matters](#) (2016)).

The other benefit is that they make the knowledge explicit. So, even if a child misses a lesson, they have a constant point of reference. They give a class a 'level playing field' of knowledge, with more children having a general awareness and set of knowledge about a topic, rather than just a handful of children who did hours of research over half term.

Please see below different strategies to gain as much learning and understanding as possible from our Knowledge Organisers:

HIDE AND SEEK

Read through your KO,
hide it away and try to
write out as much of the
information as possible.
Repeat and add to it until
you complete the whole
KO.



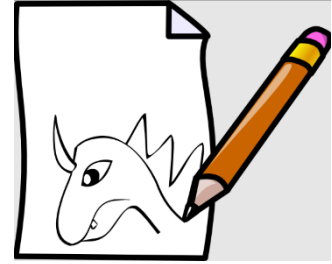
FLASH CARDS

Write the key word or
date on one side of a flash
card and an explanation
on the other side. Ask
people to quiz you to test
your memory recall.



SKETCH IT

Draw pictures to represent each fact.



TEACH IT

Teach another person the facts on your KO. You could even test them and give them a score!

POST- ITS

Use Post-it notes to write out facts, dates and keywords etc. Stick them in different places around the house where you can read them several times.



RECORD IT

Record yourself on a tablet or other device reading out different information from your KO. You can listen to yourself as much as you want!

A few other suggestions.....

- ✓ Put the key words from your KO into new sentences.
- ✓ Make mnemonics to remember the order of particular concepts.
- ✓ Draw a comic strip, storyboard or a timeline describing any series of events that have a chronological order.
- ✓ Write yourself or a partner some quiz questions.
- ✓ Quiz each other or swap your questions to see if you can answer each other's questions.
- ✓ Think about the big picture – are there any links in the content on your KO to anything that you have watched on TV, read about or heard in the news?
- ✓ Create mind maps with the information.

