brightstudy

FREE RESOURCE — WORKSHEET

# Active Recall Worksheet

Blurt, question and check: a three-step worksheet that replaces passive re-reading with retrieval practice for any topic.

| 3 | 4 | 10 min | 12 |
|---|---|---|---|
| STEPS PER TOPIC | TOPIC WORKSHEETS | BLURT TIMER | QUESTIONS PER TOPIC |

RETRIEVAL · BLURTING · SELF-TESTING · GAP FIXING


| PREPARED BY | CATEGORY | EDITION | LATEST VERSION |
|---|---|---|---|
| BrightStudy | Revision and memory | 2026, A4 PDF | brightstudy.ai/resources/active-recall-worksheet |

# What is inside

Active recall means pulling information out of your head instead of pushing it in again. It is the single most effective study technique in the research literature, and it needs no app and no special materials. This worksheet gives it a structure: blurt everything you know about a topic onto a blank page, turn your notes into questions, answer them from memory, then mark the gaps and decide what to do about each one. Use one sheet per topic and keep them as a record of what still needs work.

## SECTIONS

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## WHO IT IS FOR

Students who highlight, re-read and copy out notes but find that little of it comes back in the exam.

## WHAT IS INCLUDED

- Explanation of why retrieval beats re-reading, in one page
- Blurt page with a timer box and a gap-marking key
- Question-generation grid that turns headings into exam-style questions
- Self-test page with confidence ratings and a gap-fix plan
- Four complete worksheets for four topics

# 01

# Why retrieval works

Every time you successfully recall something, you make it easier to recall next time. Re-reading does not do this; it only makes the page look familiar. In controlled studies, students who tested themselves remembered around 50% more a week later than students who re-read for the same time, even though the re-readers felt more confident.

The worksheet uses three forms of retrieval. **Blurting** shows you how much you can produce without prompts. **Question generation** makes you think like an examiner. **Self-testing** with confidence ratings shows you where you are fooling yourself. Together they take about forty minutes per topic.

### GAP-MARKING KEY

| MARK | MEANING | WHAT TO DO |
|---|---|---|
| **M** | Missing: it was in the notes and not in the blurt | Make a flashcard; it goes into the next review |
| **W** | Wrong: you wrote it but it was incorrect | Find out why, write the correct version in the margin |
| **V** | Vague: you gestured at it without the detail | Write the precise definition or number as a question |
| **?** | In the blurt but not in the notes | Check it; it may be a useful link or a confusion |

02

# Topic 1: blurt

Topic _____ Date _____ Timer: 10 minutes. Write everything you know. No notes. Then mark gaps in another colour using the key.

# 03

# Topic 1: questions and self-test

## QUESTIONS FROM THE NOTES (AIM FOR A MIX OF TYPES)

| # | QUESTION | TYPE (DEFINE / EXPLAIN / APPLY / COMPARE) | CONFIDENCE 1-5 | CORRECT? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 5 | | | | |
| 6 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | |
| 10 | | | | |
| 11 | | | | |
| 12 | | | | |

## GAP-FIX PLAN

**Missing or wrong items that need a flashcard:**

**Vague items that need the exact wording or number:**

**One thing to ask a teacher, friend or tutor:**

04

# Topic 2: blurt

Topic _____ Date _____ Timer: 10 minutes. Write everything you know. No notes. Then mark gaps in another colour using the key.

# 05

# Topic 2: questions and self-test

## QUESTIONS FROM THE NOTES (AIM FOR A MIX OF TYPES)

| # | QUESTION | TYPE (DEFINE / EXPLAIN / APPLY / COMPARE) | CONFIDENCE 1-5 | CORRECT? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 5 | | | | |
| 6 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | |
| 10 | | | | |
| 11 | | | | |
| 12 | | | | |

## GAP-FIX PLAN

Missing or wrong items that need a flashcard:

Vague items that need the exact wording or number:

One thing to ask a teacher, friend or tutor:

06

# Topic 3: blurt

Topic _____ Date _____ Timer: 10 minutes. Write everything you know. No notes. Then mark gaps in another colour using the key.

# 07

# Topic 3: questions and self-test

## QUESTIONS FROM THE NOTES (AIM FOR A MIX OF TYPES)

| # | QUESTION | TYPE (DEFINE / EXPLAIN / APPLY / COMPARE) | CONFIDENCE 1-5 | CORRECT? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 5 | | | | |
| 6 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | |
| 10 | | | | |
| 11 | | | | |
| 12 | | | | |

## GAP-FIX PLAN

**Missing or wrong items that need a flashcard:**

**Vague items that need the exact wording or number:**

**One thing to ask a teacher, friend or tutor:**

08

# Topic 4: blurt

Topic _____ Date _____ Timer: 10 minutes. Write everything you know. No notes. Then mark gaps in another colour using the key.

09

# Topic 4: questions and self-test

## QUESTIONS FROM THE NOTES (AIM FOR A MIX OF TYPES)

| # | QUESTION | TYPE (DEFINE / EXPLAIN / APPLY / COMPARE) | CONFIDENCE 1-5 | CORRECT? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | |
| 2 | | | | |
| 3 | | | | |
| 4 | | | | |
| 5 | | | | |
| 6 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | |
| 8 | | | | |
| 9 | | | | |
| 10 | | | | |
| 11 | | | | |
| 12 | | | | |

## GAP-FIX PLAN

**Missing or wrong items that need a flashcard:**

**Vague items that need the exact wording or number:**

**One thing to ask a teacher, friend or tutor:**

# Keep going

BRIGHTSTUDY

This resource covers the part of studying that happens away from a screen. BrightStudy does the rest: upload your notes, slides or recordings and it turns them into Study Docs, flashcards and exam-style questions, then schedules your reviews with spaced repetition. There is a free plan to get started.

## PAIRS WELL WITH REVISION AND MEMORY

| FEATURE | WHAT IT DOES | LINK |
|---|---|---|
| **Spaced Repetition** | Revisit your learning with scheduled reviews. | brightstudy.ai/features/spaced-repetition |
| **Flashcards** | Active recall with focused question-and-answer cards. | brightstudy.ai/features/flashcards |
| **AI Explanations** | Help understanding answers and remembering ideas. | brightstudy.ai/features/ai-explanations |
| **Deep Learning** | Explain your understanding and get feedback. | brightstudy.ai/features/deep-learning |

## RELATED RESOURCES

| RESOURCE | LINK |
|---|---|
| **Spaced Repetition Tracker** | brightstudy.ai/resources/spaced-repetition-tracker |
| **Mind Map Templates** | brightstudy.ai/resources/mind-map-templates |
| **How to Write Flashcards That Work** | brightstudy.ai/resources/flashcard-writing-guide |

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