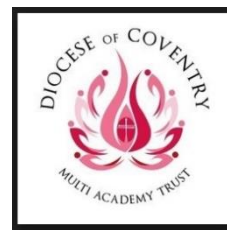




## How we use knowledge organisers at Leamington Hastings C of E Academy



Knowledge Organisers are tools to help children gain, retain and build the knowledge and skills set out in the curriculum intent, and are part of our curriculum implementation. They provide children and teachers with a 'bigger picture' of the topic to be learnt about. Each organiser will be no larger than one size of A4 and will contain 'chunked' sections, using the agreed school template below (please delete all writing in yellow highlighter).



knowledge  
organiser template.docx

The sections on the knowledge organiser template are: prior information known from prior year groups or earlier in the academic year, key knowledge as essential facts laid out in easily digestible chunks, key vocabulary, concepts and integral images. Maths knowledge organisers may include sentence stems, English knowledge organisers may include spelling rules, and history knowledge organisers may include timelines as part of images. The knowledge organiser will contain a border, which will be colour coded according to the national curriculum subject; this will support the children to identify the subject they are learning about. These colours used within the knowledge organisers are:

Reading – dark blue

Writing – light blue

Maths – indigo

Science / Understanding the World (the natural world) – light green

Computing – grey

History / Understanding the World (past and present) - pink

Geography / Understanding the World (people, cultures and communities – maps) – orange

R.E. / Understanding the world (people, cultures and communities) – red

P.E. / Physical Development – black

Music / Expressive Arts and Design (being imaginative and expressive – musical elements) – purple

Art and design / Expressive Arts and Design (creative with materials) – pale yellow

Design and technology / Expressive Arts and Design (creative with materials) – golden yellow

Personal, Social and Emotional Development – brown

Research shows that our brains remember things more efficiently when we know the 'bigger picture' and can see the way that nuggets of knowledge within that subject area link, enabling children to know, remember and do more. Making links helps information move into our long term memory. Regular retrieval of knowledge helps us remember more effectively. It moves knowledge from working memory into long term memory, freeing up space in the working memory to take on new knowledge.

At Leamington Hastings, each child has a file containing their knowledge organisers. These will be built on throughout the school so that children can refer to their previous learning easily. In Key Stage One, they are stored on the children's tables. In EYFS, they are stored in the reading area.

At the start of each unit of work:

- The new knowledge organiser should be added to the children's folder.
- The new knowledge organiser should be stuck into the relevant book to indicate the start of a new unit of work.
- The new knowledge organiser should be added to the working wall as appropriate (as an enlarged copy)
- The new knowledge organiser should be sent home via the class section of the newsletter.
- The new knowledge organiser should be placed on the school website.

### Possible ways to use Knowledge Organisers in the classroom

**For teachers** (planning, delivery and assessment)

- 1) **Set the scene:** show the knowledge organiser at the start of the lesson or unit, draw attention to the facts that pupils will explore and how these fit into the bigger picture. This will give pupils a sense of perspective and coherence, along with sparking their interest.
- 2) **Assess pupil's knowledge:** give pupils a blanked-out knowledge organiser as an end of unit assessment to help judge how much of your intended curriculum pupils have actually learned.
- 3) **Check previous knowledge:** give pupils the knowledge organiser for a previously covered topic at intervals that get increasingly longer, to help them revisit and retain key facts.
- 4) **Make clear links with prior and future learning:** when lesson planning, look at knowledge organisers from previous or later year groups/units to quickly get a sense of what pupils have previously covered or need to know for the future.
- 5) **Ensure Progression:** tailor key concepts and vocabulary on the knowledge organiser so that they become increasingly complex to ensure pupils are progressing.
- 6) **Co-construct together** – give partially filled in / empty knowledge organiser and construct it together with children filling it in.
- 7) **Build the knowledge organiser together** – as concepts are taught, add it to the working wall. Build up the knowledge organiser together over the course of the topic. Add information, comments, post its etc. around the working wall from children if appropriate.
- 8) **Make links** between knowledge organisers to help children understand how their learning connects, e.g. look at a previous year's knowledge organiser and discuss how the new knowledge links and builds upon it.
- 9) **Use as a reading text** to help children read the information and to ensure they understand it.

**For children** (retrieval activities)

- 1) **Flashcards:** get pupils to make a set of flashcards that include all of knowledge items for one section. They can then use them in spare moments for self-quizzing.
- 2) **Paired retrieval:** get pupils to quiz each other on a knowledge item. Partner A reads out one part of the knowledge item (for example, "The sea of tranquillity") and partner B responds with the associated information ("A large dark area of the moon where the astronauts of Apollo 11 landed").
- 3) **Self-quizzing:** ask pupils to use a blank piece of paper to cover one column of a table on the knowledge organiser, give them a few minutes to write down the associated definitions to each term, then allow them to check their answers.
- 4) **Online quizzing:** use an online quizzing platform such as Quizlet or Kahoot to create questions linked to the knowledge organiser, which pupils can complete independently for homework.
- 5) **Just A Minute:** based on the popular Radio 4 show, ask pupils to try to list facts from their knowledge organiser for 1 minute straight, without repetition, hesitation or deviation.
- 6) **Use regular low stakes high frequency testing** as quizzes and games etc. to assess children's knowledge and build retrieval skills.
- 7) **Ask higher level 'why' and 'what if' questions** to stretch the children's understanding and add detail. Has knowledge deepened beyond the baseline outlined on the knowledge organiser?

- 8) **Slot in time for children to regularly refer to their knowledge organiser folders**, or cut out sections, to deepen knowledge in a particular area.

### Avoid Common Mistakes

A Knowledge organiser, like any classroom tool, is only effective if everyone is using it correctly.

- Don't ignore the knowledge organiser. If you do, so will pupils- so don't give out knowledge organisers at the start of the unit and never mention them again.
- Don't encourage the idea that "it's on the knowledge organiser, so you don't need to learn it." The aim of the knowledge organiser is to transfer all of its facts to pupils' long-term memory. They can then think in a more sophisticated way.
- Don't rely entirely on the knowledge organiser during lessons. The facts on a knowledge organiser are the crystallised, necessary information about a topic, but they don't represent the topic in its entirety. Teachers should still model, provide explanations, make connections and elaborate on the material.
- Ensure that the vocabulary, facts etc. in the knowledge organiser are numbered to make them easier to use for quizzing etc.
- Don't make quizzing "high stakes". Frequent, low stakes quizzing has many benefits, which soon diminish as higher stakes are introduced. (For example, issuing a detention for failing to achieve 8/10). Quizzing is a learning event in itself, and not simply an assessment check.

\*When sending Knowledge Organisers home:

- Send home at the start of a unit of work.
- Direct parents to use with children.
- Use as an optional home learning task – can you fill in the blank knowledge organiser?
- Homework can be based around the knowledge organiser.
- Use as an aid for parents to understand what the children are learning at school.

Examples of knowledge organisers used at Leamington Hastings:

