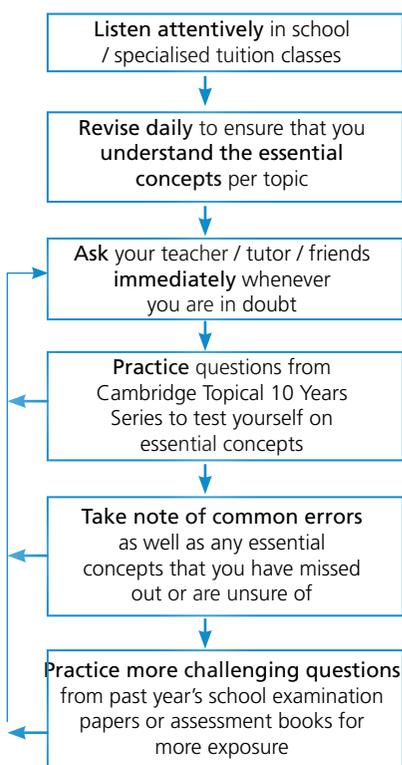


How to Master O-Level Chemistry

By Winners Education Centre

Strategy of Studying

Many students have the wrong strategy of studying Chemistry. They spend their time reading and memorising the facts inside their school notes as well as reference textbooks and expect to score well for Chemistry, which does not work! Memorising and regurgitating information alone without understanding the underlying essential concepts per topic are not sufficient since in GCE O-Level Examination, only about 15-20% of marks are allocated to recalling of facts (such as the qualitative analysis table, chemical definitions...). I will suggest the following flow-chart when it comes to mastering GCE O-Level Chemistry:



Good Grasp of Chemical Definitions

It is also very important for you to know all the definitions that can be tested in your major chemistry examinations. Knowing the chemical definitions well will also empower you to understand the key concepts underlying each topic. You can go to: <http://www.SimpleChemConcepts.com/ChemicalDefinition> to obtain a list that covers the most important and frequently tested definitions in past years examinations.



Tips for Scoring in O-Level Chemistry Examination

Paper 1 (Multiple Choice Questions)

This paper aims to assess students on their knowledge and understanding of key concepts, as well as test them on their ability to handle information and solve problems in application-type questions.

Many students tend to neglect Chemistry Paper 1 and do not prepare well for it. You must know that it contributes 30% weighting, and doing well in it will push up your overall Chemistry grades.

Students need to answer 40 questions in 1 hour so you must have a good strategy so as not to waste time. I will suggest that you use the following approach:

Step 1: Start working from the front of the paper by shading the answers to all the questions that you are confident about. Circle any questions that you are unsure of so that you can come back to work on it later. A good strategy is to use 1 minute for each question so that you have a total of about 20 minutes left to come back to work on the "circled questions".

Step 2: Go through the paper again, looking at the "circled questions" and solve them. Do all the ones that you are able to solve, but do not waste time on any questions you got stuck. You should now have only a few questions that are unanswered.

Step 3: Check all the questions that you have answered to ensure that there are no careless mistakes made due to 1) wrong concepts used in solving the questions 2) human errors of shading the wrong answer in the answer sheet.

Step 4: For those "circled questions" that you are not able to solve, you should use the elimination method to eliminate two of the options which 1) you have never come across before 2) conceptually the statement is definitely wrong. With 2 options left, you have to make a decision and select one of them. Do not procrastinate for too long until the examiner tells you to stop writing!

Paper 2 (Structured and Free Response Questions)

Just like in Paper 1, this paper also tests students on their ability to handle information and solve problems in application-type questions.

This paper consists of two sections.

Sections A: Consists of several compulsory questions in which students are required to write their answers in the answer spaces provided. Do not waste time deciding which questions to do since you must do all of them!

Section B: Three questions to answer in which first two are compulsory. The last question is an EITHER / OR question for students to choose to answer. One strategy is to look at the marks allocated at the different parts of the question and decide which one (EITHER or OR) gives you a higher chance of scoring more marks.

Paper 3 (School-based Science Practical Assessment or SPA)

This paper is meant to assess students on their Chemistry practical skills on three skill sets:

- Skill set 1: Performing and observing an experiment
- Skill set 2: Analysing an experiment
- Skill set 3: Planning an experiment

Students will be assessed twice for skill sets 1 and 2, and only once for skill set 3, which is spread across Secondary 3 and 4. Since SPA is a school-based assessment, you will be assessed directly by your own school teachers.

It is important that you attend all practical classes in school and listen attentively to the "important instructions" and "useful tips" highlighted by your school's Chemistry teacher in order to perform well for Paper 3.

We are certain that the strategies discussed will be a useful guide for you to prepare for your GCE O-Level Chemistry examination and definitely look forward in hearing how it has benefitted you. Go unleash your potential!