

Top Tips for... teaching a linear course

1. Have a display in the classroom showing the course as a timeline (or a geographical journey). Students can chart their progress through the course. This could also be in students' planners or diaries.
2. Set homework activities that are based on previous topics so that students are revising (and making links between different units) as they go along.
3. Re-use case studies - for example, if you use the Holderness Coast to illustrate coastal landforms or management, use it as a tourism case study too.
4. Think about whether you need to teach a unit at the specific time set out by the exam board. If aspects of different units were combined, or a place-based approach adopted, students would be encouraged to make links between different units and think more synoptically.
5. Completing Controlled Assessment in Year 10 allows for a content focus in Year 11. The more complex, key-word heavy topics can be saved until Year 11 - or taught at the start of Year 10 when students are perhaps most keen and enthusiastic.
6. Plan starter activities that act as revision for previous units.
7. If your course has a skills-based paper, integrate the teaching of these skills into the course rather than teaching them separately.
8. Introduce students to exam questions, markschemes and examiners' reports early in Year 10, and make them an integral part of the course.
9. Ensure that arrangements for exam concessions are made early so that students who are entitled to extra time, readers or scribes have them, and make sure these are applied during Controlled Assessment and mock exams too.
10. Liaise with the science department and find out when they teach plate tectonics, rocks and ecosystems; if they've already covered the concepts in science, students will have a better understanding when they cover these topics in geography.
11. Encourage students to use apps such as flashcards on their phones. If they make revision resources for each topic as it's taught they can build up a bank which will be useful during end of course revision.
12. Use local case studies so they are more relevant to the students and easier to remember.
13. Use 'specification speak' with students so they understand exam questions and know how to answer them.

14. Build regular one-to-one tutoring/mentoring sessions into your lessons so you can discuss with students where they are at, how they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
15. Focus lessons around exam criteria rather than lesson objectives.
16. Have a chart of exam criteria ("I can...", "I know...", "I understand...") in students' books and have them traffic light the relevant criteria at the end of each lesson. This helps students focus their revision and can help you with lesson planning.
17. Have a key word focus for each lesson. Introduce the key words at the start and challenge students to use each word three times (verbally or in writing) within the lesson.