



HOW TO SURVIVE

YOUR FIRST YEAR OF THE IB

From the
IB graduates at

Lanterna
education

ABOUT THIS ZINE

Welcome to the brand new Lanterna IB Zine! As IB survivors we know exactly what you are going through this year. The work, the deadlines, the CAS, the Extended Essay... Here we have put together our very best advice and tips to help you through your IB journey. Use this to relieve stress, find inspiration, and hopefully improve your study habits for the better.



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CAS

Thinking outside
the box

A Lanterna CAS guru once said that when one is bored of CAS, one hasn't tried hard enough to make it interesting! There are a million different ways to get those 150 hours, so it is up to you to make your CAS experience one to remember. Here are few ideas to get you started:

Take up Parkour Parkour is the art of getting from A to B no matter what obstacles are placed in your way. Experienced Parkourists can safely drop from great heights, scale tall walls and jump between buildings! Clubs like London's **WeFew** and **Stockholm Parkour Academy** can teach you how.

Volunteer at an animal shelter Why not use your CAS hours to make some adorable furry friends? Many animal welfare charities rely upon volunteers to exist. Contact shelters in your local area to see whether they could do with your assistance and/or cuddling expertise.

Create your own open air cinema CAS is a great excuse to spend time with your friends. Find a blank wall or fasten some sheets together, borrow a projector and some speakers, pop some corn, call up everyone you know, and you have yourself an open air cinema! Charge entry with proceeds going to your favourite charity.

Go geocaching Did you know that there are millions of treasure troves hidden all over the world waiting to be found? Download the **Geocaching** app and use your phone GPS to track them down! Learn to map read and plan your routes with friends.

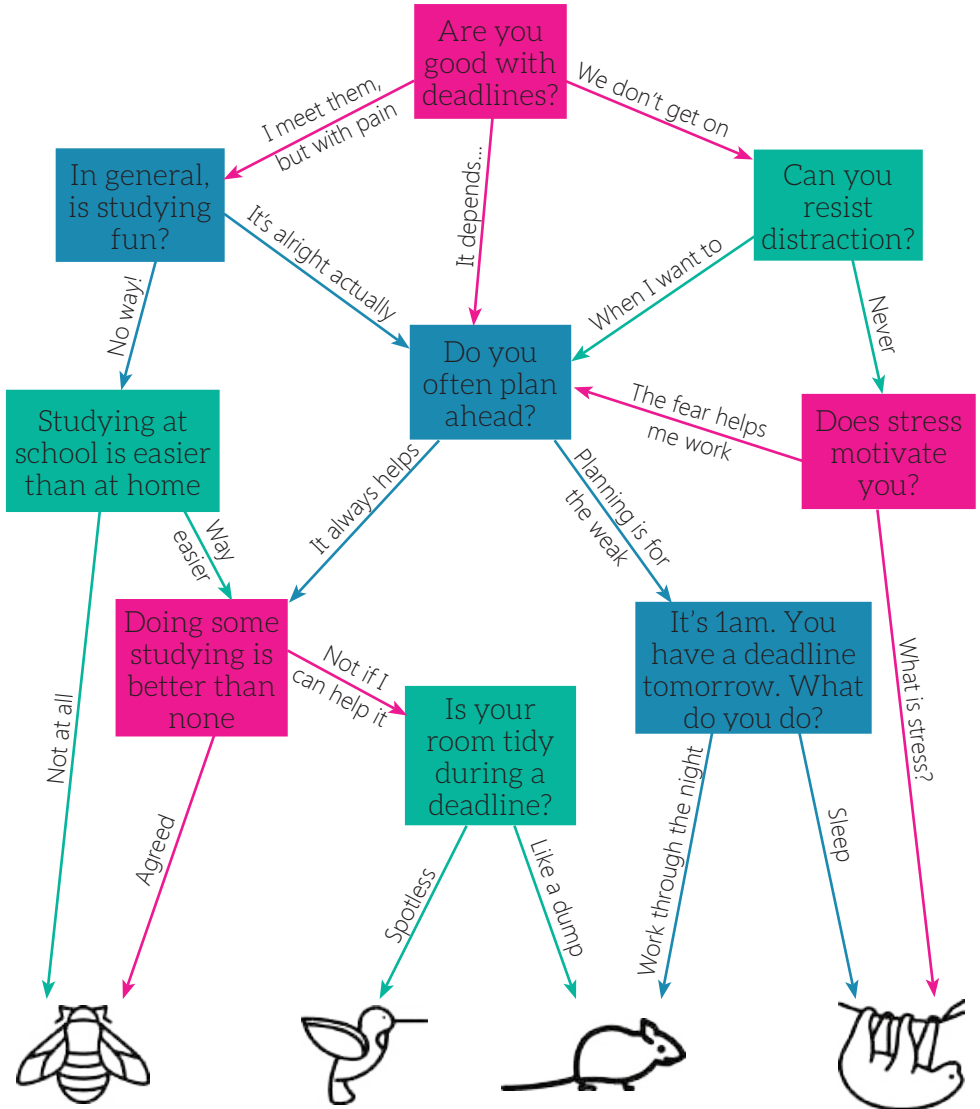
Design and paint a mural Can you think of any walls around your school or local area that could do with an injection of colour? Design a mural and see whether the wall owner would be happy for you to bring it to life! Better still, use the mural to explore an important theme or issue.

Make a documentary If you are a budding filmmaker, documenting the world around you could be a great way to refine your skills and build your portfolio. You could even host a private screening for family and friends once your project is complete.

Train for an assault course Does the sound of crawling through underwater tunnels, ascending slippery slopes and dashing through a field of electro shock wires appeal to you? If so, you could be just crazy enough to take on an extreme obstacle course like **Tough Mudder!** Log your training, and get friends and family to sponsor you.

Organise your own TEDX event By now you've probably seen some of the incredible talks intended to inspire and inform found on **ted.com**. But did you know that you can host your own local **TEDX** event? Invite your heroes to be guest speakers and see what you can learn from them.

What kind of PROCRASTINATOR are you?





Over-Organized Worker Bee – You reassure yourself by planning your work in intense detail, whether it's making detailed lists of everything you need to do or organizing all of your stationery and folders ten times over. However it's often difficult to stop the planning and actually get on with the work.



Nesting Hummingbird – Your vice is pretty much anything in your environment, and to be honest it doesn't matter whether it's interesting or entertaining. Cleaning your room, cooking, creating iTunes playlists for your different moods... if something will help you avoid studying, you will try it.



Fear-Struck Mouse – The panic of the deadline may be your best friend, or it may be your worst enemy. Either way, your barrier to working is yourself, and your challenge is making those big pieces of work feel more manageable.



Happy Sloth – Ignorance is bliss. At least until your teachers have a chat with you. In the meantime Netflix binges are probably a favourite, as are fridge binges. Sometimes, if your friends aren't good enough at diverting you from your work, you'll arrange something yourself on the day of the deadline.

Procrastination Solutions



To-do lists & Priority squares

Give your work some order by breaking it down into small pieces. To-do lists are a great way to keep track of everything that needs to be done while making it feel more manageable.

To help yourself know what to do when, put the tasks into categories using a handy Priority Square.

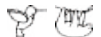
PRIORITY SQUARE

	Urgent	Not Urgent
A lot of brain power	DO IT NOW	Do it later
Not a lot of brain power	Do it next...	Do it last



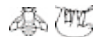
Schedules and Planners

For those who appreciate structure but could use a little help finding one that's useful. Use a diary, schedule or wall planner to plan your work ahead of time. Decide when you will get your work done and how long it will take, and then follow the plan.



Total isolation

Maybe total is a bit harsh. But sometimes it's necessary to give yourself some tough love. Find a new study environment that's free of distractions, whether it's the library, an empty classroom, or a café. Get rid of the things around you that could disrupt, from phones to WiFi to friends.



Reward Systems

Ideal for those of you who need that extra push to get some work done. If you can't stop snacking or

going on YouTube, tell yourself you will get what you want after you've finished a certain piece of work. Equally you can use this as motivation to finish work faster.

Evernote Take notes which are easy to organise and search for later, and sync them between all of your devices. Clip webpages to read later, and set reminders for maximum efficiency.

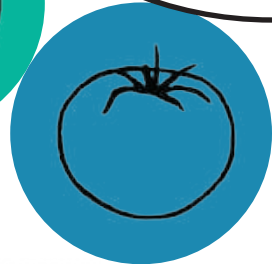
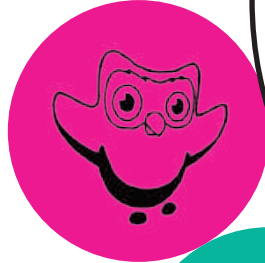
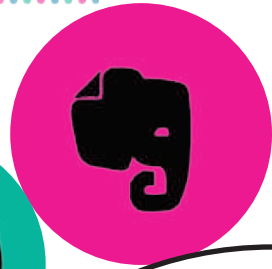
f.lux Your laptop and phone emit blue light whilst you work. This light messes with your body's rhythm and can disrupt your sleep. F.lux filters out this blue light as you approach bedtime.

focus Add this app to your Mac menu bar, then choose when to be productive and for how long. Customise the motivational messages that appear when you try to procrastinate!

Duolingo The key to language learning is regular practice. Make this less of a chore by gameifying your learning! Use Duolingo to play games, boost your vocab and solidify your grammar.

Time Out Sitting staring at a screen for hours on end while you study is bad for your eyes and posture. This app reminds you to take a break and move around at custom intervals.

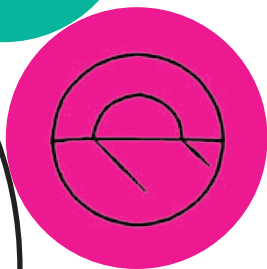
Strict Workflow Block the websites you find most distracting (Facebook anyone?) for 25 minutes, then take a break for 5 minutes. Repeat until your work is done!



12 A
to make your

APPS

IB life easier



Forest Plant a seedling on your screen when you sit down to work. Concentrate for half an hour, and your seedling will grow into a tree. Swipe off, and your tree will die!

Quizlet Make flashcards to test yourself on the way to and from school. Use little and often whenever you have a moment to get names, dates and facts into your brain well before exams start.

Twilight Like F.lux (see left), but for Android. Download this onto your Android phone or tablet to minimise your sleep disruption and maximise your productivity!

SleepCycle Track your sleep patterns and trigger your alarm during your lightest sleep phase within half an hour of your ideal alarm time. Wake up feeling refreshed and ready to study.

Memrise Make your own vocab flashcards to revise your Language B, or use one of the millions of sets generated by other users. Track your progress and test yourself against someone else!

SelfControl Allows you to block distracting websites and your mail servers for as long as you like whilst you are studying, so that you aren't so tempted to procrastinate and waste time online.

2. Get your scope right

Choosing a question with the right scope can make or break an Extended Essay. Your title shouldn't be so narrow that you rapidly run out of sources to read and things to say, but beware of choosing one which cannot be answered well in 4000 words. To narrow your scope, try focusing on a specific time period, geographic area, literary text, author, source type (e.g. photos, articles, letters), organism or phenomenon. Here's an example of how you might narrow by time period: NOT "Why did the U.S.S.R fail to accept the Marshall Plan?", BUT "To what extent did the events of 1947 determine the USSR's rejection of the Marshall Plan?".

3. Do your research

Find out which resources are available to you by chatting to your school librarian and exploring online. Have a look through:

- **Online archives:** All kinds of collections are now online and public; from rare books to newspaper articles to art objects.
- **Journals:** Many world class journals on all sorts of topics can be accessed free of charge online.
- **Public libraries:** Use Worldcat to find your nearest. Many have digital catalogues that you can explore to find relevant content.

1. Choose your topic

There's no 1 magic way to find an Extended Essay topic, and Steps 1-3 are very interlinked. Inspiration can come from anywhere so cast your net wide! To get started, brainstorm your interests. Give yourself 5 minutes to write down:

- The topics and lessons you have enjoyed most in the past year.
- All of the things you haven't covered but you wish you had (e.g. books you wish you could study in English, or parts of History not on the syllabus).
- Your main interests outside the classroom.

THE PATH

to Extended Essay success

7. Refine

No Extended Essay will be perfect from the first draft, so leave yourself plenty of time to edit. The last thing you want is to be up all night writing your first draft the night before the deadline, as you won't do yourself justice. Your supervisor can read and comment on one draft of your essay (and they cannot make any edits), so make sure it's a good one! This should all be done as early as possible, so that you can carefully put your supervisor's edit suggestions into practice. Also enlist friends and family to proof read for spelling and grammar errors – these are easy to miss when you've spent so long writing something!

4. Stay organised

Take your research notes in a programme like **EverNote** or **OneNote**, so that they are easier to sort and refer back to later. You will need to include page numbers in your references, so write down the page number in your notes every time you begin to take notes from a new page. This may sound fiddly, but it will save you a lot of time later! It's also good to use a reference manager like **Mendeley** or **EndNote Basic** to keep a track of where you are getting your information from. Both have add-ons for MS Word which allow you to insert references as you type, and automatically generate a bibliography at the end. Tada!



6. Be original

The best Extended Essays are those in which a student clearly has something new to say and has thought independently. Academic honesty is key, and you must ensure that whenever you use somebody else's idea or information, you cite your source. Be wary of directly copying whole sentences or chunks of text without quoting the author. When you are taking a large volume of notes, it can be easy to forget what you have written yourself, and what you have copied and pasted into your notes. If you are worried that you may have unintentionally plagiarised, you can use an online checker such as **WriteCheck** or **Grammarly** for reassurance.

5. Construct your argument

Read through the notes you have taken again, and highlight information that directly answers your research question. Then, make a detailed plan. Your aim should be to develop a convincing argument that builds from start to finish. Every point you make should be backed up with evidence, and should link back directly to your question. You could start by making a mind map of all of the key topic areas you know you want to cover, with each main branch forming the basis of an essay chapter. Give each one a subheading to focus your argument, and set yourself mini-deadlines for the completion of each one to pace yourself.

How to take notes

LIKE A PRO

It is a truth rarely acknowledged that effective notes will make any IB student's life easier when revision time arrives. Different techniques work for different people, but if you try some of these tricks you might just revolutionise your productivity during the Diploma. Try following these 3 Golden Rules:

★ Clarity

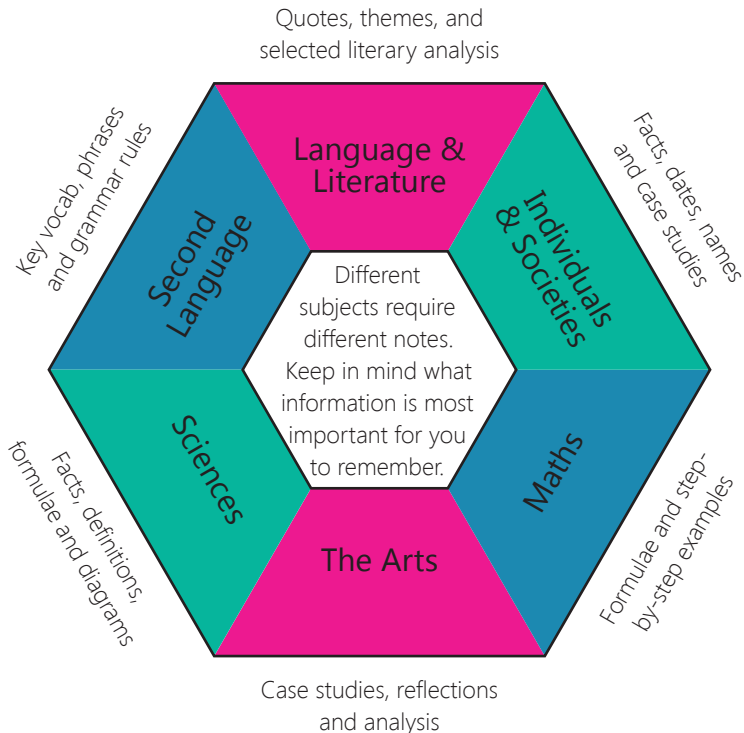
Make sure your notes are clear in every way, from how they look, to the way they're written, to what they're saying.

★ Organisation

Keeping your notes tidy and structured will ensure that you can find the information you need, when you need it.

★ focus

Your notes should include only the key information you need to remember. Be selective and condense things down.



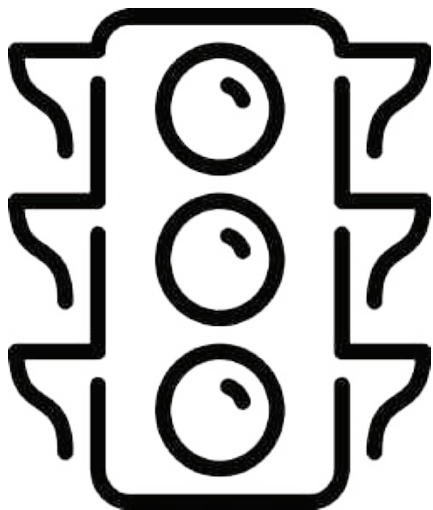
The Traffic Light System

Use a highlighter to colour code your syllabus as you learn new topics. This will help you to track your progress and structure your revision, as you will be able to identify exactly what to focus on first (hint: the red!).

Red = I don't understand

Yellow = I kind of know what this means

Green = Clear as an empty road



THE CORNELL METHOD	
CUE COLUMN	NOTETAKING COLUMN
Highlight key ideas here	Use the Cornell method to organise your notes.
Use diagrams, & include your own questions and comments	Divide up your page like this. Include your main notes here in short, clear sentences.
SUMMARY SECTION	
Use this section after the lesson is over to summarise the main ideas you've learned.	

The artful notetaker's checklist

- I always make notes during lessons
- I can always read and understand my notes afterwards
- My notes are organised so I can easily find each subject and topic
- I make sure that I include all the information I need in my notes
- I am confident that this time next year, my notes will not only make sense but be useful for my revision

THE 24 HOUR RULE

Fact: If you don't review the information you learn in a lesson, most of it will not stay in your long-term memory.

Solution: Go over the notes you make from class as you go along in order to make it stick. The best time to do this is within the first 24 hours.

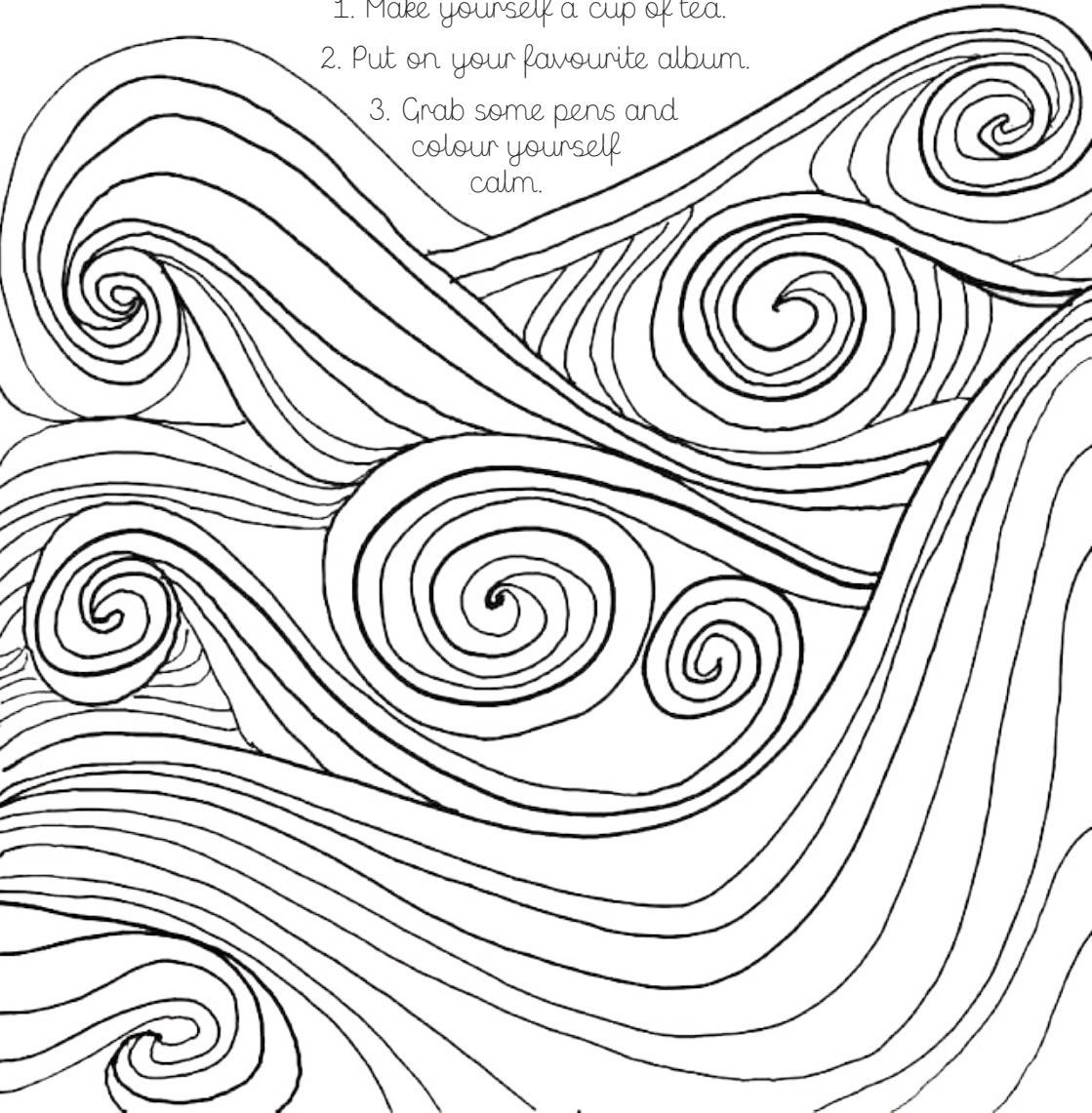
Conclusion: Create a strategy that will allow you to go over your notes regularly. Do this on a weekly basis, or even better on a daily basis. Use this time to read through your notes, fill in any gaps in topics you don't understand, and to tidy up the notes you made by rewriting them in clear, concise sentences or bullet points.

COLOUR

yourself calm

Feeling stressed and having difficulty concentrating? Sometimes we are too hard on ourselves and when our brain asks for a break we say "No!". Sometimes a simple 15 minute break from your worries is all you need. Just follow our three steps below for relaxation:

1. Make yourself a cup of tea.
2. Put on your favourite album.
3. Grab some pens and colour yourself calm.



TYING UP

the loose ends of year 1

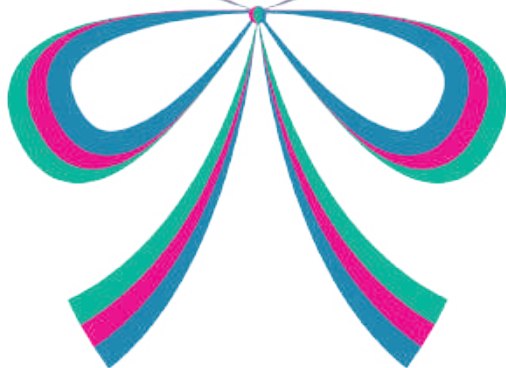
The Summer in between year one and two of the IB is crucial. Used wisely, it can be an opportunity to take a breath and look back at the past year, and to fill in any knowledge gaps so that you are confident and ready to take on the final stretch. Here's what you need to do:

Get your notes in order

Remember the pile of notes that has been accumulating in the corner of your bedroom for the past term, because you were far too busy to deal with it? Now is the time to do so. Also identify any gaps in your notes using the syllabus and past papers. Add more detail and case studies where necessary.

Tackle your demons

Set yourself the goal that when you return to school after the Summer holidays, there will be no topic from your first year that you don't understand. Summer is the perfect time to recap the content that you found most difficult, when are able to go through it at your own pace, and without a million other school tasks demanding your energy and time.



Free Resources

Request a wallplanner to help organise your IB life, or download our study guides about the EE, TOK, specific subjects and more.

FOR MORE SUPPORT

head to
lanternaeducation.com

Newsletter

A helping hand delivered straight into your inbox once a month, with tips to guide you through each stage of the IB.

Blog

Weekly posts bursting with advice about everything from study skills and time management to how to ace your TOK and EE.



Originating as a CAS project in 2004, Lanterna Education helps thousands of students each year through our preparation and revision courses, online and around the world. Our tutors are elite IB alumni who know exactly how to support you on your IB journey.



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