VOCAB

3-Step Vocab
Memory System

LOCK IN NEW WORDS

20 "danger words" and higher-band replacements
Lock in new words so they show up in writing

Review of Spaced Repetition methods
Typical sentence patterns for exams
Memory story techniques and triggers
Step-by-step daily schedule and tracking

Proven spaced repetition schedule

Sentence-building templates

Memory story techniques

5-minute daily practice routines

Printable tracking worksheets

Real exam examples

Goal:

Instead of "I've seen that word before…", your child can:

- recognise it in reading

- use it correctly in sentences

- choose it in exam writing under pressure

We do this with 3 steps:

1. Capture & schedule (SRS)

2. Sentence (connect it to meaning)

3. Story (burn it into memory + practice using it)

OVERVIEW: THE 3 STEPS

SRS SCHEDULE – WHEN YOU REVIEW IT

SENTENCE – HOW YOU USE IT

STORY – HOW YOU REMEMBER IT

You only need 5–10 minutes a day if you do it consistently.

STEP 1 – SRS SCHEDULE (WHEN TO REVIEW)

SRS = Spaced Repetition System = review just before you're about to forget.

For each new word:

- Day 0 – Learn it (today)

- Day 1 – Quick review

- Day 3 – Review

- Day 7 – Review

• Day 14 – Review

• Day 30 – Quick check

If you still know it at Day 30, it's basically "yours".

A. VOCAB SRS TRACKING TABLE (PRINTABLE)

Vocab Set #1 – Week of: ___ / ___ / _____

(Max 10 words per set)

Word	Day 0 (Learn)	Day 1	Day 3	Day 7	Day 14	Day 30	Still know it? (✓/✗)
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							
7.							
8.							
9.							
10.							

How to use it (parent or student):

• On Day 0, write the words in the left column.

• On each review day, tick the box if they still know: meaning, sentence, story (or hint of it)

• If they forget after Day 7/14, just restart that word as if it's Day 0 again.

STEP 2 – SENTENCE (LOCK IN MEANING)

For each word, we build one good sentence:

Not:

"Reluctant = I am reluctant."

But:

"I was reluctant to raise my hand in case I got the answer wrong."

SENTENCE TEMPLATE (USE THIS EVERY TIME)

For each new word:

Word: _____

Simple meaning (in your own words):

"It means: _____"

Sentence (realistic, exam-style):

"_____."

WORKED EXAMPLE – WORD: reluctant

Word: reluctant

Meaning: not wanting to do something / hesitant

Sentence:
"I was reluctant to raise my hand in case I got the answer wrong."

Do this for all 10 words on Day 0 (it takes ~10–15 minutes if you keep it tight).

STEP 3 – STORY (BURN IT INTO MEMORY + PRACTICE USING IT)

The "story" doesn't need to be long. It just needs to be:

- Weird or funny (so your brain remembers it)

- Connected to the meaning

- Quick to retell during reviews

STORY TEMPLATE (10–20 SECONDS EACH)

Story trigger:
"A time when [word] could happen is when…
_____."

OR

"I imagine a little scene:
_____."

WORKED EXAMPLE – reluctant

Sentence:
"I was reluctant to raise my hand in case I got the answer wrong."

Story trigger:
"Imagine a turtle in class, hiding inside its shell whenever the teacher asks a question. The turtle really knows the answer but is reluctant to stick its head out in case it's wrong."

Now whenever the kid sees *reluctant*, they can:

- Picture the turtle in its shell,

- Remember it means hesitant / not wanting to do something,

- And they have a ready-made sentence pattern they can tweak.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER – FULL EXAMPLE FOR 1 WORD

Let's do one word completely:

Word: optimistic

Day 0 (Learn)

Word: optimistic

Meaning (my words): expecting good things to happen / hopeful

Sentence:
"Even though our team was losing at half-time, our coach stayed optimistic and told us we could still win if we worked together."

Story trigger:
"I imagine a coach drawing a smiley face on the whiteboard at half-time and saying, 'We're losing, but I'm still optimistic.' The smiley face is like his positive attitude."

Day 1, 3, 7, 14, 30 (Review)

On review days, ask:

"What does optimistic mean?"

"Say your sentence again (or a new one)."

"What's your coach + smiley face story?"

If they can answer → tick the boxes.
If they get stuck → quickly reteach and restart the schedule for that word.

DAILY ROUTINE (10 MINUTES)

You don't have to do all steps every day. Here's the simple rhythm:

Day 0 (once per set)

Pick up to 10 new words.

For each word:

- write meaning in your own words
- make 1 good sentence
- make 1 quick story trigger

Review days (1, 3, 7, 14, 30)

Pick up your card / list. For each word:

- Say the meaning (no looking; look only if stuck)
- Say or write one sentence
- Quickly recall the story trigger

That's it. Whole review for 10 words: 5–10 minutes.

HOW TO MAKE WORDS SHOW UP IN WRITING

Even with SRS + sentence + story, your child has to practice using the words in real writing.

Here's the mini "use it or lose it" step:

MICRO-TASK – 5-MINUTE "WORD DROP" CHALLENGE

Once or twice a week:

1. Pick 3–5 words from your current set.
2. Set a timer for 5 minutes.
3. Write a short paragraph (story or argument) that uses all the chosen words correctly.
4. Underline the vocab words.

Example (using reluctant, optimistic, exhausted):

"Even though we were <u>exhausted</u> from training all week, our coach stayed <u>optimistic</u> and told us we could still win. I was <u>reluctant</u> to believe him at first, but when the game started, our new tactics actually worked."

This is what teaches your brain:

"These aren't just flashcard words. They belong in my writing."

1-PAGE SUMMARY FOR KIDS

You can compress this into a quick reminder:

3-STEP VOCAB MEMORY SYSTEM™

1. SRS – Review words on Day 0, 1, 3, 7, 14, 30.

2. Sentence – One strong, realistic sentence for each word.

3. Story – One quick, funny/clear story trigger for each word + 5-min "Word Drop" paragraphs each week.

If they do this with even 5–10 words per week, over a term they will have:

- 40–80 words
- deeply understood
- rehearsed in sentences + stories
- and actually used in their own writing.

That's how the 3-Step Vocab Memory System™ delivers its promise:
not just memorising meanings, but locking words in so they show up on the page when it matters.