

Friday 18th September 2026

RE: Homework Top Ten Tests Year 7-10

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following the successful trial in the summer term of last year, Gracewood Academy's homework initiative of Top Ten Tests will launch on Thursday 24th September 2026 for all students in year 7 to 10. We know that students that regularly do homework are more likely to achieve their academic potential than those that do not; homework makes learning more memorable, encouraging what has been learnt at school to be retained for longer; and that homework builds life skills such as time management, organisation and self-discipline. It is with these three principles in mind that we launch homework for year 7 to 10.

What are Top Ten Tests?

Top Ten Tests have been designed to encourage students to frequently revise the core knowledge in each subject and to help students recognise the connection between hard work and positive personal outcomes. Top Ten Tests are quizzes that students are set in each subject. The quizzes are carefully designed by subject experts to quiz students on the most important knowledge in each subject. Each week, students should self-quiz against their Top Ten Test booklet to prepare for a quiz in Form Time each Thursday. Each homework task will consist of ten questions and answers based on the core knowledge students need to remember for future learning. Students will self-quiz against the Top Ten Test booklet and are expected to complete one full page for each homework task using their black pen and then green pen to correct. A clear set of instructions, an example and the rules for what makes successful homework are all on the booklet that students will receive.

Research shows that regular retrieval practice is one of the most effective ways to strengthen memory and improve learning. The knowledge included in Top Ten Tests represents the most important content students need to retain as they progress through the curriculum. Some parents may wonder why this homework focuses on short retrieval tasks rather than extended written pieces. The reason is that students can only analyse, explain and write confidently when they have secure knowledge in their long-term memory first.

How can I support my child with Top Ten Tests?

1. Follow the timetable: In the Top Ten Test booklet, students have a timetable. Check that students have completed their homework and have packed their work into their bag ready each Wednesday evening.
2. Establish a routine: Support your child by creating a quiet space for them to do their quizzing. Remove digital distractions.
3. Get involved: Our most successful students tell us that their parents, carers and family members will quiz them at home too using the booklet. Not only is this a fun way to help your child, but you'll also be really impressed with all the powerful knowledge they're learning!

4. Following the quizzes in form time, we will share with parents areas of strength and knowledge gaps and how to help at home with these areas.

How will we support students with their homework?

- We will provide students with the homework pack and exercise book to complete their homework in.
- Students have already been introduced to the system in assembly and practised the routine during form time. Those in year 8, 9 and 10 have completed the trial last year and are very clear on what to do. Those in year 7 have had additional dedicated time for practice.
- Students will have a quiet space after school from 3-4pm to complete homework should they wish to.
- 'Grace points' will be given for completed homework.
- There will be an initial two-week period with no detentions to allow students to get used to the system and ensure everyone can get it right.
- Throughout Half Term 1 our Inclusion team will monitor and support students who may need additional support or reasonable adjustments made to their homework.
- Should students lose the homework booklet, replacements will be kept at pastoral and a copy will be posted online to our school website from Thursday 24th September.

After Thursday 15th October, students with incomplete homework on a Thursday in form time will receive a 30-minute same day after school detention where they will complete their homework. We will also monitor closely student quiz scores in form time to establish whether additional support is required.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your child's form tutor or pastoral manager in the first instance.

Thank you for your support.

Hannah Thorncroft
Vice Principal