



won't be able to understand the more complicated parts of the course.

FRENCH/GERMAN

The trick that I used in my Irish study, of putting the aural material on the mp3 player, really helped in both French and German too. It feeds into everything, not just the aural. Of course, it helps with the written papers as well.

For French, my teacher made us write out so many letters and notes that they came almost automatically to us by the end of it.

The comprehensions are also a matter of practise. It does help to go through the pieces, looking up the words you don't understand, but you can get bored with that.

I found German grammar a lot more difficult than the French. Our teacher did a lot of work on the rules, which helped, but it is complicated. You just have to put the work in.

HISTORY

For me, the most important thing with history was to get an overall picture in my head of what went on in the past, and how one thing related to another. It's all in the book so while I took notes some of the time, for the most part, I just read.

People can sometimes get hung up on dates but I left them all until near the end, when I wrote out the dates and learned them off. It's much easier doing things that way around rather than trying to remember the dates first and then the story.

GEOGRAPHY

There's simply a lot of learning in Geography. Yet again, it's just about practising. About a month and a half before the Junior Cert,

I took lots of papers and did them out. I did loads of sketch maps as well. They're good to practice. The rest is just learning.

SCIENCE

I studied science pretty hard. When I was studying it I always did physics first. It was definitely my favourite. Chemistry wasn't too bad but biology can be confusing. You need a very good memory for it. I basically learned the material and then did exam questions. Most of the exam questions are pretty short so they're handy to do.

It's important to have your experiment copy in order. You have to hand it up and you get marks for just having it. They are literally there for the taking. For the exam, the experiments are very shorthand. You don't need to go into the same detail that you did in your experiment copy.

BUSINESS STUDIES

Business is split into theory and accounting. For the theory part, I wrote down all the key definitions and learned them. It helps to split things up and make them more manageable. The theory isn't bad, though - a lot of it is everyday stuff.

There's a set way of doing accounting. There are a lot of guaranteed questions so if you understand how it works and you practise it, it's actually fine.

A lot of my class found business to be their best subject.

RELIGION

This isn't the greatest option for someone who's looking for an A. There's a good bit to it and it is surprisingly difficult. The questions can be very confusing because sometimes a question isn't

black or white. We studied Islam as our world religion. That part of it is like history, no matter what religion you study. It's interesting enough.

CSPE

The CSPE project is the main thing. Once you do that, you're sorted. You have to do it right, though. You have a lot of time to do it so you have to make sure that you have enough information on the project sheet. If you make any effort though, you should expect pretty good marks.

The written paper isn't too bad but it definitely helps to read newspapers and to watch the news at night.

MUSIC

This was a bit easier for me because I play music but if you start from first year, it's feasible, even if you've never even held an instrument before. A good part of the exam is musical theory, which is overlooked by some people. You have to know various things like the features of a song, but this was a subject that I enjoyed.

ART

In art, I found that class-work was enough. We had about two hours per week and that was enough for the main part. Coming up to the project deadline you do have to put in a bit more time. The main rule is not to leave the project too late. Make sure you have extra sketches that you can put in to show that you were working throughout the year.

Art is enjoyable. It doesn't strain the brain and there's a great sense of achievement when you finish the project.