

What are Retrieval Packs?

A Retrieval Pack is a collation of the retrieval activities from a unit of work into a centralised resource, generally a booklet. It is a way to 'retrieve retrieval' and to ensure that retrieval is in-built, carefully planned and revisited within a coherent unit of work and not just an activity to do at the start of each lesson.

What does the research say?

Currently, there is no research into the specific use of a Retrieval Pack.

However, the format of a Retrieval Pack helps to ensure students are actively testing themselves and not simply re-studying material through a 'passive' approach. Dunlosky (2013) argues that 'practice testing' is vital in enhancing learning and boosting student achievement.

Kirschner, Sweller and Clark (2009) state that 'if nothing has changed nothing has been learned'. A Retrieval Pack and revisiting prior knowledge through this format can be a powerful learning tool to help establish this across a whole unit of work.

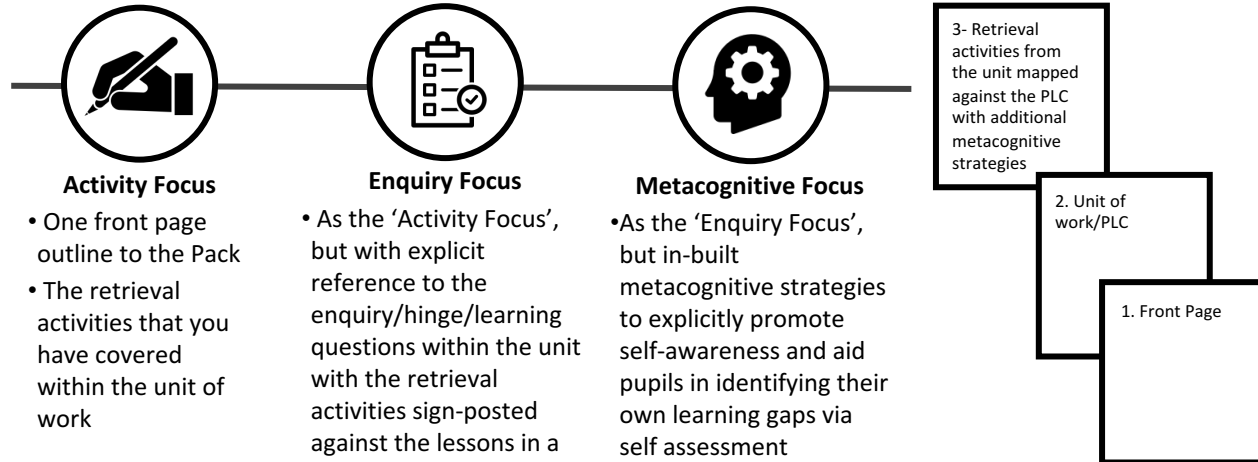
Bush and Walker (2019) state that 'the closer you are to forgetting a piece of information, the more likely it is that you will benefit from revisiting it.'

Further Reading

Kate Jones; Retrieval Practice
Tom Sherrington; Rosenshine's Principles in Action
Busch and Watson; The Science of Learning

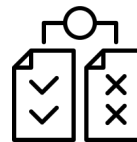
Using Retrieval Packs

There are several ways Retrieval Packs can be used within the history classroom. There are currently three forms of explicit focus when selecting how to put together a Pack. Each form builds upon the other and I usually use PowerPoint to create mine.



Do's and Don'ts

To really maximise your use of Retrieval Packs, follow this guidance on do's and don'ts



- Keep it low stakes – this aids motivation and confidence
- Explicitly explain the rationale of the Pack to pupils – strengthening memory
- Keep the activities in the Pack in chronological order reflecting the lesson sequence in your unit of work. Therefore knowledge can be built upon
- Explicitly change the retrieval activities that pupils have already encountered in the unit of work
- Let the creation of the Pack affect your workload or well-being. Students should self-assess and mark
- Let the pupils use their notes or copy the previously completed retrieval activities from the unit of work

In the History Classroom

Below are some examples of how you could use Retrieval Packs within the history classroom

Active Revision

Completed by pupils prior to an assessment. This helps to strengthen memory of the core knowledge in a unit

Knowledge Organiser

It compliments a KO. It enables pupils to be active and apply information from the KO to a different context in a variety of activities across a unit



Low stakes quizzing

In future units, specific parts of the Pack can be revisited again or used for self- and peer quizzing to interleave links and connections across the year

Workbooks

A retrieval pack can be in-built or attached to workbooks across a unit of work