Knowledge Retention - the use of case study diagrams

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• The struggle of a content-heavy subject/exam.
• The challenges this poses particularly for students with perceived weak memory skills

Case study questions are worth 32% of the marks on Paper 1 and 39% (including SPaG) on Paper 2 of the AQA GCSE.

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Students have to:

Learn 20+ case studies

Apply them to the correct question

Remember a variety of figures unique to that case study

Show an ability to structure their answer appropriately.
The Traditional Approach
Daniel Willingham notes that imagery helps to build memories.
The Durrington High Approach

• Each case study has its own unique diagram – with minimal text.
• Images are bespoke to the topic – although where appropriate images are shared between case studies.
• The process is a collaborative one between all members of the department.
• Keep it simple.
• Model the diagram with your students.
• The drawing, narrative and ‘banter’ increases the chances of students remembering.
• Repeat
Student Impact

- Increased confidence
- All ability groups are able to recall more information
- Increased marks in exams – students consistently achieve 6/8 or above
- More time to focus on exam structure and meaning of command words.
The next stage...
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Do:

- Take time to identify the key messages
- Keep the picture simple
- Title the diagram and use the specification wording
- Structure the diagram (effects/responses)
- “Number anchor” as many images as possible
- Use the 1, 2, 3 approach to embed long-term memory

Don’t:

- Overload the diagram with images
- Allow the students to make their own version
- Add colour as it causes confusion
- Just draw them once
- Use PowerPoint

https://dhsgeography.wordpress.com