

## Stage 4 – Active Study and Self-Testing

**Slides 1-2:** Stage 4 is the crucial stage of Active study and Self-Testing – it is a stage that will allow you to really engage with the material in different ways on different days, and to build your mastery over time. Active study is important because it is the best way to discover what you need to know – and to identify strengths and weaknesses that help to set priorities for review. By attempting early and often to retrieve information from memory, and to answer questions and complete higher order learning tasks, you gain insight into how to return to source material strategically seeking answers to questions.

Remember - learning science encourages varieties of purposeful, deliberate practice retrieving information from memory and working with new material. It encourages such work to happen in spaced sessions over time. So the goal is to regularly create opportunities to work with materials and to test one's recall, understanding and ability to apply new information.

The blue print or plan for such practice over time can be set up according to syllabus topics, learning objectives, study guides, or question sets.

**Slide 3:** It is also important to remember that such work is meant to be challenging. Really becoming comfortable with it will take time and practice, and it means embracing a growth mindset. Effectively working in this way requires expecting and leaning into the fact that you are working with the material and answering questions often “before you are ready” - and you can expect to get questions wrong. Use such feedback as a valuable learning opportunity – and trust that you are creating opportunities to review and fill gaps based upon the feedback you get from your efforts. So, as you do questions fully investigate both questions you get right and those you get wrong to really identify what you need to know.

**Slide 4:** The purpose of this talk is to encourage regular active study and self-testing as a *learning* technique, not just a means of assessment. Given the demands of your schedule the only way to make such work a regular part of your day is to pay careful attention to how much time to devote to study practices. We will talk more about time management, but keep in mind that such practice-based work will probably best be done in smaller chunks of time during the week... and such regular work can inform plans for the weekends when you'll potentially be able to return to questions or priorities you've identified during the week.