

PART TWO

Read the following text and choose the sentence which best fits each gap from the list supplied. Three of these sentences are not to be used.

- A) are allowed breaks from stimulation
- B) consistently wins high grades
- C) don't have the time to assimilate what's being taught
- D) fails to take full advantage of a pupil's potential
- E) students show improvement regardless of subject, teacher or their ability
- F) was this group that last autumn scored highest in a mock GCSE paper
- G) was unpredictable who would score higher overall
- H) you know what is expected from fully tapping your potential

Pupils get 8-minute lessons

The Tyneside comprehensive whose star pupil, Laura Spence, was rejected by Oxford University is to teach all GCSE subjects in eight-minute bursts after finding that they boosted pupils' results by half a grade.

The mini-lessons at Monkseaton community high school are interspersed with frequent breaks for sport or word games. The technique is based on neuroscience research which has found that the memory develops most effectively with short bursts of learning repeated at intervals.

Monkseaton is to extend the method to all GCSE teaching from this autumn after a pilot scheme improved results by an average of half a grade for science pupils.

Paul Kelley, the headmaster, said: "It may seem bizarre to teach an eight-minute lesson, break for 10 minutes to dribble a basketball and then repeat the process, but it works." "In rigorous evaluation, 1 _____."

Kelley and his school made headlines in 2000 when Spence was rejected by Oxford despite a prediction of five As at A-level. Gordon Brown, then chancellor, described her rejection as an "absolute scandal" and said that she had fallen victim to the "old Establishment". She went to Harvard instead.

Monkseaton, which is a comprehensive in a deprived area, 2 _____ and has sent pupils to top British universities and Ivy League colleges in America.

Kelley's technique, known as "spaced learning", is based on the research of Douglas Fields, a neuroscientist at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in Baltimore. He has found that connections between developing brain cells form most effectively when they

3 _____.

The implication is that teaching conventional lessons or trying to revise by cramming for long periods 4 _____.

In one of about 40 experiments carried out at Monkseaton, nine groups of children of equal ability were taught for the same biology GCSE paper. All received the same teaching apart from one group who were given mini-lessons in the schools gym. It 5 _____.

"While repeating information is vital in making memories stick, even more important is giving the brain a break between the repetitions," said Kelley.

He is so convinced the lessons work that he is entering 52 13-year-olds for a GCSE in science this summer. One half will have received conventional teaching while the other half will have received mini-lessons.

Professor Alan Smithers of Buckingham University cautioned: "It sounds like one of these fads that overtake educationists from time to time."