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Brentwood County High School, a 1,400-pupil secondary school in Essex, is one of the first beneficiaries of Scholastic's new GCSE 9-1 Practice and Revision series. Dave Richardson, the School's Deputy Head, purchased the GCSE English Language & Literature and Mathematics revision guides, exam practice books and online revision planners for Year 10 and 11 pupils for utilisation from March 2017.

“We bought the resources at a time which really fitted well into Year 11, and the stage they were at in the school year,” Dave said. “Previously we had struggled to find appropriate resources on these subjects because of the new GCSE exams coming in – and Scholastic's is by far the best I've seen. For the pupils it has helped them to structure their revision and manage it on a day-to-day basis. The link between the revision guide and exam practice book has been particularly welcome. It means they have one book that they can use to help them revise and, as it has a 'how to do it' section, exam questions and answers, everything they need is altogether. What they thought was especially clever is the resources 'knowing' the day of their exam, and then highlighting what they needed to do and when in the days and weeks leading up to it. That captured them there and then. The 'do it', 'nail it' and 'snap it' features in the margin of the books were all very popular.”

A free app accompanies the books, allowing students to plan and revise on the go with practice questions and step-by-step guidance. “Pupils work best through technology, so having the app linked into the book and especially their exam timetable is very powerful,” Dave explained. “The app helps students plan out their revision easily and see how much content they need to revise. Being able to take screen shots and have a set of revision cards on their phones has been great. In our school we are big on technology and the students are used to learning online, so this complements our general ethos. Many pupils also expressed a view that the book itself supported them even more prominently the closer the exam got. We obviously don't know Year 11's GCSE results yet, but the resources were undoubtedly helpful and we will continue to roll them out to next year's cohort.”

English Language & Literature and Mathematics teachers at the school have been equally impressed. “Colleagues have used the resources both as independent revision tools and also to set specific tasks to be done in lesson and as homework,” Dave said. “This means staff can easily set independent revision and students can work through it by themselves without help. The Scholastic resources go into far more detail than some of the other revision guides we have used and I've not seen any other resources that have an app linked to them. We would definitely recommend the resources to other schools. Everything you need to revise is in one place to enable students to work independently.”

For Brentwood County High School, it was their first experience of Scholastic products. “Scholastic was incredibly easy to deal with,” Dave said. “In one day we had copies of each book to inspect – then, having decided to place a bulk order, we had 400 copies at the school just two days later. I will definitely explore the other GCSE 9-1 Practice and Revision subjects they have, including combined and single sciences.”

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