

CARL JUNG'S PHILOSOPHY OF MEMORY

The psychologist and philosopher Carl Jung saw memorization as an active process that he divided into five distinct levels (*Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 1967). The farther you go along his continuum, the easier it is to learn.

FIRST LEVEL: SENSORY ~ This is the most basic of the five levels, encompassing what you see and hear. If you walk into a classroom, sit down, spend the class daydreaming, or staring out the window, and then leave, you will probably have a tough time remembering. But if you engage your senses, use your eyes and ears, and get involved with the lecture and discussion, you have mastered this step.

SECOND LEVEL: MEMORIZATION ~ Repetition. It's how we learn our new phone number or zip code. It's how most of us learned material in grade school, junior high and high school. While you'll still use this skill in college, you may find that it plays a smaller role in overall learning.

THIRD LEVEL: ANALYSIS ~ This is the level where real learning begins. You are starting to integrate new material with what you have learned previously. This is active learning, not passive memorization.

FOURTH LEVEL: JUDGMENT ~ Your opinion is the key here. Once you form an opinion on something you tend to learn it better and remember it longer. To form an opinion, you need to be an active learner (see Level Three), and you need to be willing to ask questions and be receptive to the ideas of others.

FIFTH LEVEL: INTUITION ~ This is the ultimate level, where learning becomes connected to your experience. This is the stage where you begin to make connections between things you learn in one class, and things you learn in another. You begin to see that everything connects, in some way. You begin to see the way "the big picture" looks! You have to work toward this level, but the reward is a lifelong appreciation of the very process of seeking knowledge.

