



IMPROVING MEMORY II

In the last lesson, one main point was that memory becomes better through action. You learned three actions to put information into memory and two actions to improve recalling information.

In this lesson, you will learn some “tricks” memory experts use to help them learn and recall. These “tricks” will work because they help you to use your memory actively.

Imaging

A mental image is a picture you make up that includes the information you want to remember. It has been found that making up images is a very good way to learn and to recall.

You can make up an image about any information - biology theory, formulas, history, names, events. The image does not have to be realistic; in fact, very unusual images are usually easier to remember.

To make up an image try to find a picture, pattern, or similarity to something you have seen. Then, let your imagination create a picture that includes the main points of the material.

For example, you might imagine a billboard on a highway with a name or event printed on it and a picture illustrating the event or person's deeds. You could think of a sequence of events to be similar to separate panels in a comic strip. You could imagine a famous event as a painting.

The important actions to take when making an image are to identify the ideas, facts, and main points you want to remember. Then, include these ideas in your image. Some people actually draw their images others just imagine them.

Acronyms

An acronym is a word or group of words made from a longer message. Acronyms are effective for memory because they are shorter and easier to remember. And, you must be active to create acronyms.

A well known acronym to help remember the great lakes is HOMES. The letters stand for Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior. Acronyms are easiest to remember when letters make up a word or sentence.

Acronyms can be used to remember anything including names, places, main points, dates, events, formulas, ideas, and numbers.

To make up acronyms look at the information you must remember to see if you can make up words or sentences using letters from words or parts of words. An acronym will work for you if you think carefully when you make it up and practice remembering it. An acronym doesn't have to "work" or make sense to anyone else. If you improve your memory with an acronym, that's what counts.

Peg Words

A well known memory technique is to associate or think of together two or more things to be remembered. It is called "Peg" words because you create pegs like those on a coat rack to hang the ideas you want to remember.

The first step is to develop your "pegs." Most people use numbers and pictures to create pegs. Some often used pegs are: One is bun, two is shoe, three is tree, four is door, five is hive, six is sticks, seven is heaven, eight is plate, nine is line, ten is hen. You can make and memorize as many of these as you like; some people create 100.

To remember, you pair the ideas, main points, dates, names, etc. you want to recall with the pegs. For example, if you wanted to remember the presidents, you could imagine Washington looking out of a hamburger bun, Adams sitting in a huge shoe, Jefferson in a tree, and so forth.

Rhymes

Rhymes have been used with small children to remember stories for centuries. Rhymes are words that sound alike (e.g., lie, die; pet, bet) and are very good to improve memory. Rhymes can be used with any information you can make rhyme.

A common rhyme is "i before e except after c or when sounded like 'a' in neighbor and weigh." Because of the rhyme, an easily forgotten spelling rule can be recalled. The same idea can be used to remember any information including main ideas, dates, names, places, formulas, etc.

To make a rhyme, examine the ideas, names, dates, main points you must remember. Try to arrange the ideas so that they rhyme like a poem. You can add words and ideas to create a story poem if needed.

Recitation

Recitation is a way of practicing information that must be memorized. Most often recitation is repeating the information from memory, usually in front of someone. Recitation can be done with family, parents, friends, classmates, and in study groups.

The action of recitation is to tell or say to someone else who can correct you, the information you must remember. Many students use recitation to practice memorizing passages from literature such as a scene from a play or a poem. But, recitation is just as good to remember names, main points, dates, events, and ideas. It is most important to remember that, when you use recitation, you must concentrate on the meaning and not just blankly repeat.

Q: How can I get started?

You have learned five “tricks” to improve memory. Try each one with information you are studying. For each “trick”, choose two important ideas, theories, main points of a chapter, etc. you must remember and use the “trick” to improve your memory. You can use Form 17.1 if you wish.



**Form 17.1
Memory Tricks**

Imaging

Subject

Memory #1
Description:

Information to be remembered:

Memory #2
Description:

Acronyms

Subject

Memory #1
Description:

Information to be remembered:

Memory #2
Description:

Peg Words

Subject

Memory #1
Description:

Information to be remembered:

Memory #2
Description:

Rhymes

Subject

Memory #1
Description:

Information to be remembered:

Memory #2
Description:

Recitation

Subject

Memory #1
Description:

Information to be remembered:

Memory #2
Description: