

# MNEMONICS

Mnemonic strategies are *memory aids* that provide a systematic approach for organizing and remembering facts that have no apparent link or connection of their own. Mnemonics provide the tools necessary to memorize and recall almost any information. "Forgetting" (lack of recall) occurs rapidly unless certain steps are taken to process the material into memory. Mnemonics can provide the pathway for those steps with fun and ease.

You've used mnemonics in the past, but probably didn't know the term:

- How do you remember the names of the planets?

*My Very Elegant Mother Just Served Us Nice Pizza*

Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto

- How do you remember the notes on the lines of the "G" clef?

*Every Good Boy Does Fine* (EGBDF - the notes of the G clef)

## HINTS FOR USING MNEMONICS:

Apply ALL of your senses to the active process of learning and combine them whenever possible.

### 1. Get Physical

- orally recite whenever possible
- write the information several times
- walk/pace if you need to while reciting, reading, etc.
- gesture with your hands or face, if it helps

### 2. Visualize

- form clear pictures in your mind
- the mind remembers pictures more easily and for longer periods than words

### 3. Link Information

- hook new information onto old information
- group or chunk material together (see the back of this sheet for details)
- remember similar/associated material when memory is blocked (serves to "jog" memory)

Try it yourself. Write a catch phrase for the names of the first seven presidents of the United States:

Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, Adams, Jackson

## MEMORY TIPS

- Match material to be learned with the most effective memory technique/mnemonic device
- Combine memory techniques whenever possible (doubles the chances of long-term memory)
- Always repeat orally as you write
- Use 3" x 5" cards, one entry per card
- place card in upper left corner of mirror, bulletin board, locker, etc.

adapted from: Learning to Learn by Gloria Frender (Incentive Publications, Inc.)

## MORE MEMORY TIPS

- Students can feel overwhelmed by the sheer amount of information they have to learn. **CHUNKING INFORMATION** can assist students in retaining information. For example, when memorizing the map of Europe, tackle three countries at your first sitting. After you know these three, add two more. Once you have learned those two, review the "five" that you now know. Add two more countries, then review the seven that you now know. Continue, until you know the entire map. Chunking can also be used when studying for a test in any subject - learn a few key areas at each sitting. **IMPORTANT** - start to learn days ahead of the quiz/test.
- **Mental Pictures** - visualize how you see or expect to see a total picture (diagrams). For example, close your eyes and visualize an x-ray view of the skeleton from the head down (skeletal labeling).
- **Write it!** Write it repeatedly and say it aloud as you write.
- **Word Links** - Use the meaning of one word to associate with another. For example, the capitol of Oregon is Salem. Think: There are many sailboats in Oregon because it is on the ocean. What do you do with these boats? Sail-em!
- **Remember** - it is important to begin studying **DAYS** ahead of time in order to retain information. Studies show that if students wait to study until the night before an exam, the information is not retained as well as if they have been reviewing for several days.

# FACTS ABOUT MEMORY

1. The human mind can remember five to seven unrelated ideas for a short time.
2. It takes about 15-25 minutes of practice over several days to successfully memorize and retain information.
3. Freud concluded that motivation, desire and emotion play a large part in your "brain power."
4. With the exceptions of disease, injury and death, the brain never forgets anything. Only our inability to recall stands in our way.
5. The average adult cannot remember 50% of what he or she has just read. Twenty-four hours later, recall is about 20%. **Quick and constant review is the remedy.**
6. For right-handed people, visual information is processed in the right hemisphere of the brain, and verbal information is processed in the left hemisphere. If you make up a picture to go with material to be processed, it is then implanted in both hemispheres. This increases the chances of recall.

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## 8 Memory Principles

(With suggested key words)

1. If you want to remember something for a long time, it must be something you're interested in. Find a reason that will make this piece of information important to you. (*personal interest, ego, me*)
2. A positive attitude about the strength of your memory is key. You *MUST* be confident that you *WILL* remember. (*confidence, attitude*)
3. How much new material you will understand and remember depends on how much you already know about the subject. The more you increase your basic knowledge, the easier it is to build new knowledge. (*knowledge, background*)
4. Decide what is most important, and choose only those parts to study and learn. (*importance, select*)
5. Organize ideas into manageable bundles and meaningful groups. (*organize, bundles*)
6. Say ideas aloud in your own words. This is the best way to move information from your short-term memory to your long-term memory. (*aloud*)
7. Draw a picture in your mind and on paper of what you want to remember. Key words will help you decide what to draw. (*visualize, picture, draw*)
8. The brain needs time to hold on to new information. It's better to learn small bits over a long period of time than to try to cram lots of information in the night before a test. (*time, cram*)

adapted from: [www.dartmouth.edu/admin/acskills/memory.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/admin/acskills/memory.html), [www.mtsu.edu/~studskl/mem.html](http://www.mtsu.edu/~studskl/mem.html)

# MEMORY BLOCKERS

are any factors that interfere with your ability to recall facts.

## WHY DO WE FORGET?

- lack of intentional purpose to remember
- faulty recall system
- poor listener
- lack of attention
- lack of preparation
- tired
- fear
- critical of information
- jump to conclusions
- physical stress
- bored
- mental stress or strain
- lack of understanding
- dislike the person or disagree with what he/she says

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# THE MOST USEFUL TOOL FOR SUCCESS

The most important tool for success in school is to organize your time. One of the most effective ways to do this is to set up a calendar of important events. Being able to see what events will be occupying your time helps you to plan ahead.

- Use a calendar with enough space to write down more than one upcoming event
- Write all major assignments on the calendar
- Write all social/personal events that will require a lot of your time
- Keep the calendar on the wall above your desk at home
- Highlight school assignments in one color, personal activities in another color

See the other side of this page for a sample student calendar.

Mike, the student who filled out this calendar, has quite a few non-school activities that will take up his time the weeks of April 7th and April 14th. In order to complete all assignments, Mike will pencil in the following on his calendar:

- Complete the History Project (due 4/12) by 4/6 - this will allow him to complete regular homework assignments as well as study for the Health Quiz and Spanish Test during the week.
- Complete History homework packet on Friday, 4/12 after school, as his friend will be visiting from out of town on the weekend.
- Complete reading assigned chapters for English during Joe's visit. This will leave Sunday night, Monday and Tuesday for studying for Science test (remember - studies have shown the importance of not leaving studying for the last minute)

# APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 EASTER MONDAY  No School	2	3	4  Karate 4:00-5:00  Asia Map Quiz	5  Science Review Sheet  School <b><u>closes</u></b> 2 hours early	6
7  church activities - all day	8  Music lesson 8:00-9:00	9  Rehearsal for concert 2:30-5:00  Interim Reports	10  Concert 6:30-10:00	11  Karate 4:00-5:00  Health Quiz	12  Spanish Test History Project	13  Joe visiting from Detroit
14  Joe visiting from Detroit	15 History homework packet  Music lesson 8:00-9:00	16	17 Science Test  Read first 2 chapters of novel for English	18  Karate 4:00-5:00	19	20  Karate Tournament 8:00-noon
21	22  Music lesson 8:00-9:00	23	24	25  Karate 4:00-5:00	26	27
28	29  Music lesson 8:00-9:00	30  End of Marking Period				