



# Learning Strategies

## Memorizing Information

University of Wisconsin - Whitewater

Transition Program

Project ASSIST

Summer, 2005

# Repetition

- Repeating information; reading, saying, writing
- Best for information not very detailed, complex
- Algebra procedures can be learned through repetition
- Einstein's Theory of Relativity would be hard to learn through repetition

# Mnemonics

- **Acronyms**
  - Words formed by first letter of material to memorize
  - Nonsense words can work
  - Must be pronounceable
- **Abbreviations**
  - First letter of words create abbreviation, short representation of something more easy to remember
  - Unlike acronyms, does not need to form pronounceable word

# Mnemonics (cont.)

- **Acronymic Sentences**
  - Using words that begin with first letter of words to be memorized (acronyms)
  - Sometimes form complete sentence that we can remember
- **Pegwords**
  - Building associations with words that rhyme with numbers
  - Strategy for sequential concepts
  - i.e. One-Run, Two-Shoe, Three-Bee, etc.

# Mnemonics (cont.)

- **Keywords**
  - Familiar words that sound like terms we need to memorize
  - Create mental images to help remember new words, concepts
- **Rhymes**
  - Creating verse or poems
  - Best for information too detailed to remember by simple repetition

# Applying Techniques

- **Repetition.** Decide if the information contains few enough detail to effectively apply repetition strategies.
  1. The date of an important Civil War battle.
  2. The states that are west of the Mississippi.
  3. The person that invented an important scientific discovery.
  4. The structure of the US government and its “checks and balances.”

# Applying Techniques

- Repetition (cont.)
  5. Three features of democratic government.
  6. The definition of a word that is easily pronounced and commonly used.
  7. Nine elements in a section of the Periodic table.

# More Mnemonics

- Strategies: information has too many details for repetition
- Acronyms example:
  - Great Lakes (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, Superior)
  - HOMES (note: this is a real word, helpful, but not necessary)
  - Don't need real word, but does need to be something that is pronounceable

# More Mnemonics

- Abbreviations example:
  - Names of Presidents since Richard Nixon (Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Bush I, Clinton, Bush II)
  - No vowels – can't make pronounceable word
  - Can use NFCRBCB, use repetition to remember
  - “Chunk” info into smaller, manageable pieces with an abbreviation, then memorize with repetition

# More Mnemonics

- Acronymic sentence example:
  - Names of oceans (Atlantic, Pacific, Indian, Artic, Antarctic)
  - Not a pronounceable word (apiaa)
  - Could use APIAA as an abbreviation
  - Acronymic sentence: Alice and Alan played inside
  - Most of us can easily remember this, perhaps with repetition

# More Mnemonics

- Pegwords example: Bill of Rights
  - Items are associated with sequence or number
  - Common pegwords:
    - One – run
    - Two – shoe
    - Three – Bee
    - Four – Door
    - Five – Hive

# Pegword (cont.)

- Six – sticks
  - Seven – heaven
  - Eight – gate
  - Nine – vine
  - Ten – hen
- Pick more pegwords if need more numbers

# Example: Bill of Rights

- First right is Freedom of Religion
  - Pegword for 1 is run
  - Visualize/imagine people running from a church
  - Use this to help remember that the first right relates to freedom of religion

# Example: Bill of Rights

- Second right is State's Right to have National Guard
  - Pegword for 2 is shoe
  - Imagine shiny, polished, black shoes soldiers wear
  - Use this image to remember that the second right relates to a state's National Guard

# Example: Bill of Rights

- Third right relates to citizens not having to give food to soldiers during peacetime
  - Pegword for 3 is bee
  - Imagine an army of bees demanding honey from you
  - Use this image to help remember

# Example: Bill of Rights

- Let's skip to 10<sup>th</sup> right, states run public schools
  - Pegword for 10 is hen
  - Imagine a mother hen taking care of chicks
  - Associate mother hen with chick and states running schools

# Pegwords: Final Note

- Can require creative thinking, “outside the box”
- Images using pegwords can be unconventional, even strange
- Visualizing “wild” images can be powerful memory tool

# Rhyme

- Many can remember poems, lyrics
- Powerful memory tool
- Common rhymes to help memorize include:
  - Thirty days has September, April, June, and November
  - In fourteen hundred ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue

# Graphic Organizers

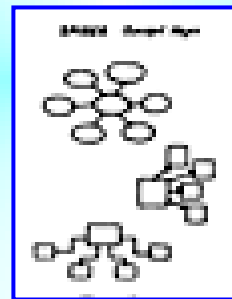
- Some information is too detailed for memorization or acronyms
- Visual presentations can help
- Flowcharts, concept maps, information webs, timelines
- Can be hand-drawn, created on common software (i.e. MS Word) or specialty software (i.e. inspiration)

# Concept Mapping

- Concept map presents/organizes information visually
- Many find this an effective learning strategy
- Different types, identified by form (format) or function (purpose)

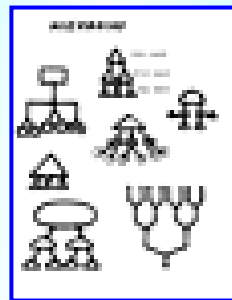
# Spider

- Uses central theme or unifying factor
- Builds out from this center
- Sub-themes radiate from center of map
- Example:



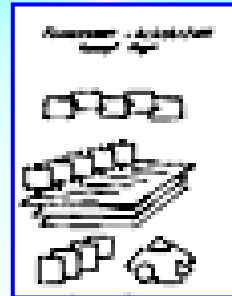
# Hierarchy

- Presents information in descending order of importance
- Most important information on top
- Placement of other factors based on relative importance or role supporting main idea
- Example:



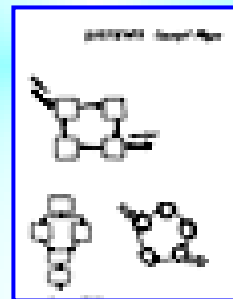
# Flowchart

- Organizes information in linear form
- Effective for timelines, cause and effect, procedures
- Use for sequential information
- Example:



# System Maps

- Similar to flowchart
- Adds “input” and “output”
- Use for processes
- Example:



# Want to Learn More?

## Memory Tips & Tricks

<http://www.psychwww.com/mtsite/memory.html>

[http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN\\_TIM.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TIM.htm)

- 2 *Mind Tools* Websites with good information on strategies to improve memory

## Concept Maps

<http://www.graphic.org/concept.html>