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Memory and Concentration

In order to learn well, there are two things you need:

- The ability to concentrate and minimize distractions while you are studying
- Memory techniques to help you remember what you have learned

Be an active learner

Many people approach studying from a PASSIVE way; they only read their textbook, attend lectures, and go over their notes. But they do not DO anything with that information.

Learners are more effective when they reorganise the information in a way that makes sense to them. You become an active learner when you engage with the material.

Ways to improve concentration and become an active learner:

- . 1) Create a quiet, well-lit study environment
- . 2) Study the same subject at the same time in the same location
- . 3) Take notes on what you are studying and re-arrange the information in some other way
- . 4) Make an association with something you already know
- . 5) Make flashcards to study from and then have someone quiz you

This gets your body and mind into a routine that makes it easier to 'get into' studying. Make a

diagram to get the 'big picture' of what you are studying. If you are reading text, draw a picture of what you are learning. If you are learning from pictures (anatomy etc.) write down

what you are learning in words

READING = DRAWING

DRAWING = READING

Helpful Memory Techniques

To memorize information, most students simply repeat what they have learned over and over. While repetition is one memory technique, it is surprisingly inefficient. Use a combination of memory techniques to create the ability to recall information.

There are several ways that memory can be categorized:

- 1) Short-term vs. Long-term memory
- 2) Recognition Memory vs. Recall Memory

So how can you move information from short-term to long-term memory so you can recall the information?

- **Short-term vs. Long-term Memory**

Short-term Memory is used when you just need to remember something for a short period of time, like when you look up a phone number and dial it. Ten minutes later you'll probably not remember the number.

Long-term memory is used when you want to remember something for a long time, such as information for your Chemistry test. Memory techniques help move information from your short-term to your long-term memory.

- **Recognition Memory vs. Recall Memory**

In recognition memory, you're trusting your brain to remember something when you see it or recognise it again. For example, you are going somewhere and you left the directions at home. You mostly remember how to get to your destination, but you can't remember the name of the street you need to turn on. You might think to yourself 'I will know it when I see it'.

In recall memory, you can remember the exact name of the street you need to turn on to. You have brought memory of the street name out of your long-term memory and into your short-term memory.

Reading for Memory

The SQ3R method is a proven method for getting more out of reading your textbook. Reading a textbook requires a different approach than reading for fun.

SQ3R stands for:

- ✓ Survey
- ✓ Question
- ✓ Read
- ✓ Recite
- ✓ Review

SQ3R Survey

Surveying provides a framework you can use to fill in information while you are reading a chapter

- ✓ Take about 5 minutes to locate core ideas from the chapter you are reading
- ✓ Read the instruction at the beginning of the chapter

- ✓ Flip to the end of the chapter and read the summary
- ✓ Flip back to the beginning, and go through the chapter. Look at the titles, words in bold or italics, and the pictures and illustrations.

The following are proven strategies will help you improve memory retention and ability to recall important information:

- **Make the information meaningful** :In your mind summarize the information you've just learned in your own words. If you are unable to do this, it is a strong sign that you do not fully comprehend the concept you're attempting to learn—and consequently will have difficulty recalling it for future use.
- **Organize the information** :Organizing information into logical categories is one of the most effective ways of improving recall and memory. "Chunking" is another organization strategy for memorizing information. "chunk" them into small groups of three or four numbers.
- **Visualization to improve memory** :It's easier to remember a picture rather than details from a book or a lecture. Visualization is one strategy that can be used to remember information that's been read in a text book or spoken during a lecture. Active Studying In order to remember or learn a concept, you must practice active studying.
- **Association** :Association involves associating, or "connecting", a word or event with a place, feeling, person, situation, or thing.
- **Frequent Reviewing** :All students cram for tests at one time or another. Although many people cram right before tests, it is not an effective long-term learning or memorization strategy.
- **Storytelling** :By integrating data, information and material into a vivid story that you can tell, you'll be able to memorize and recall information in any subject.
- **Talking** :Believe it or not, talking is a very powerful—and underutilized—strategy for improving memory. How does it work? Just talk! Talk about what you've learned.
- **Mnemonic devices** :Many people use mnemonic devices to remember specific details from lectures and reading.

Another powerful mnemonic device for improving ability to remember important information and details is the use of acronyms. An acronym is a word composed of the first letters of a list of words. How does it work? Easy. You take the list of words that you want to memorize and put them in an order