

Memory Strategies

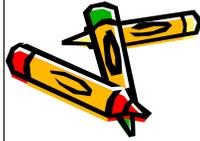


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Memory Strategies?

- **Why should I learn about memory strategies?**
 - ↑ confidence, ↓ stress, learn more, get good grades, graduate, and be successful!



Maybe you are wondering why you should learn about memory strategies? Learning memory strategies will help you develop more confidence, decrease stress, aid in learning more about the materials that you are required to learn so that you can get good grades, graduate, and be successful!

If that isn't convincing enough...

how about Melinda's confession?

Melinda was a good student. She always went to class, she took notes, read all of the assigned chapters and even read additional books. Although she felt prepared to take her exams, Melinda did not score well on her exams. There were times she said that she got confused and couldn't remember anything!



Can You Relate?

Has this ever happened to you?

What could have Melinda done differently?

Well it doesn't say what kind of notes that she was taking or the technique she used when reading her textbook. Since this is about me in my early part of nursing school, I can answer those questions. I was trying to write down everything the instructor was saying and I made a pretty rainbow on each page of my textbook.



What Should Have Melinda Done?

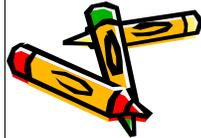
- Become familiar with her textbook so she could have selected important, essential information while looking for keywords
- Highlighted the keywords (not the entire page)
- Organize and reduced notes
- Learned some memory strategies



Strategies to Enhance Your Memory

- Visual and verbal formats
- Repetition
- Handouts/Notes
- Charts, Diagrams, Mapping
- Use acronyms
- Review material prior to going to sleep
- Other

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TIM.htm



So let's talk about some strategies that can enhance your learning. If your instructor only lectures and does not provide you with a visual, create your own visual to help you remember the concept being taught. For example, you may recall a friend or family member who had a specific disorder and that visual may aid you retaining the signs and symptoms, etc. for a given diagnosis.

One of the best ways to commit material to your memory is through repetition. Quizzing yourself over and over again (please refer to module on note taking for more information on developing flash cards) is vital. Equally important, is quizzing yourself until you are able to recite/discuss error-free. This is needed to instill the information into your brain.

If your instructor does not provide you with printed handouts or notes, make your own (more information made be found in the note taking module). From these notes, you can develop your own category and flow charts, diagram or map (this information is addressed under "other styles" in the note taking module).

Developing acronyms may be useful. For example, when learning about gallbladder problems, some of the characteristic symptoms are: the 3 F's flatulence, fat, forty. The acronym serves as a cue that is used when the information is being learned and recalling the cue when taking a test may help with the recall of the information.

Research has shown that information studied prior to going to sleep is better remembered.

Others: Some students find creative ways to learn information: making up a rap song, illustrating a story, creating a board game, etc. You may also try other aides from Other

http://www.mindtools.com/pages/main/newMN_TIM.htm

Understanding the Information

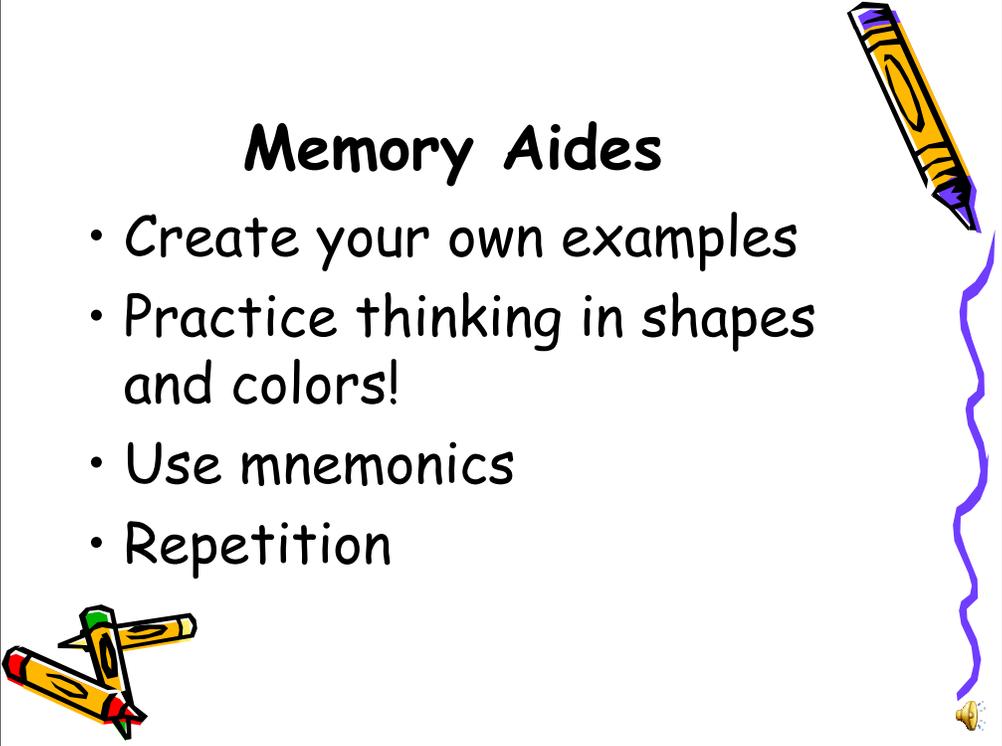
- You must fully understand the information
 - Ask yourself: Why?
 - Also ask the 4 W's and how
 - Who, What, When, Where, & How?



You must fully understand the information that you are studying or you will not do well because you can only remember what you understand. Ask yourself questions as you are studying – “Why does this or that happen?” “Who does it affect?” “What causes it to happen?” “When does it typically happen?” “Where does this occur?” and “How does it happen?”

Memory Aides

- Create your own examples
- Practice thinking in shapes and colors!
- Use mnemonics
- Repetition



Create your own examples. Draw from your experience and knowledge. In nursing, for example, think about a time when you or a family member was in the hospital and how you felt? This may help you identify psychosocial issues that a patient may experience while hospitalized.

Practice thinking in shapes and colors! Use colorful highlighters when reading, box words that are considered the main concepts, etc.

Use mnemonics – I am a firm believer in mnemonics. Mnemonics may be in the form of a rhyme, an acronym, or you may use the beginning letter of a set of information (like I previously did with the 4W's above).

Repetition is a good thing! The more you review something, over and over, the better you will be at remembering it. Remember to ask yourself questions as if you are trying to dig a little deeper in understanding a concept. If you do this each time, kind of changing your approach a bit, you will be able to develop more connections that you can commit to your long-term memory.

Sylvia Rayfield has a number of books in which she has used creative ways to learn various disorders in nursing. Her website is: <http://www.sylviarayfield.com/>

Resources

- **Study & Strategies Guides:**

<http://www.studygs.net/memory/>

- **Virginia Tech:**

<http://www.ucc.vt.edu/lynch/ImprovConcentration.htm>

