

Teaching Distributed Practice for Long-Term Storage and Retrieval

Before the Test

1. Explain to students how you can help them store and retrieve concept vocabulary with some powerful strategies.
2. Provide a demonstration on how to create a three-column format for important vocabulary words/events/concepts/ideas. Also, model paraphrasing definitions/explanations and the creation of memory cues (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, tactile, emotional).
3. Assign 5-7 words to learn for homework. Tell the students to spend 10-15 minutes at home on task. Students are paired for 1-2 minutes of recitation and practice in the classroom the next class session.
4. Ask the students how many of them know the words better on that day than they did the first day. Ask them to identify the strategies that helped them learn the words/concepts.
5. Repeat the process each day. Provide a practice test with about 10-14 words. Ask the students to discuss their memory strategies.
6. Guide the students to select trouble words for review the night before the test.

Word/Concept/ Important Name, Event, etc.	Meaning/ Explanation/ Description	Memory Cue/Picture, Movement, etc.

After the Test

1. Identify progress and improvement.
2. Guide students to select strategies that worked and abandon practices that were not effective.
3. Encourage the students to create improvement goals and plans.
3. Continue the process above for 30 days.

What will you teach the students?

1. Strategy and effort are better indicators for success than intelligence.
2. Distributed practice, the three-column format, deep processing, monitoring, and strategy adjustment are effective strategies for storing and retrieving information.
3. Self efficacy (i.e., I can do it!) can be developed when you select a challenging goal, use effective strategies, monitor progress, make adjustments, and celebrate success.

Memory Storage and Retrieval: Steps to Success

You will remember best when you . . .	Explanation	Memory Cue						
1. Intend to remember and believe in yourself.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Identify what you are supposed to remember. •Schedule the time to work on the material. •Select strategies that you will use to remember. •Believe you can remember and learn successfully. 							
2. Record the information you want to remember,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Use a notetaking form/format that identifies the idea to be remembered, and explanation/definition, and an example or memory cue. •A three-column form works well because it is organized and it helps you drill and practice. 	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 33%;">Word/Concept/ Important Person, Event, Big Idea, etc.</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Meaning/ Explanation/ Description</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Memory Cue</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="height: 40px;"></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Word/Concept/ Important Person, Event, Big Idea, etc.	Meaning/ Explanation/ Description	Memory Cue			
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3. Explain the ideas or information in your own words.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Try to use from five to nine words to explain or define the information. •Don't just copy the information without understanding it. 							
4. Group or "chunk" the information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Try to find a way to organize or place the information into groups that make sense to you. •If you can't find a pattern to group the information, break down the words into small groups with about the same number of items. 	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 33%;">Precipitation</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Seasons</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Clouds</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>rain snow fog hail</td> <td>Fall Winter Spring Summer</td> <td>Cirrus Cumulous Stratus</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Precipitation	Seasons	Clouds	rain snow fog hail	Fall Winter Spring Summer	Cirrus Cumulous Stratus
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<p>5. Create memory cues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Use visual images that are colorful, moving, familiar, unusual, bizarre, or funny. •Use auditory sounds/images that sound like changes in tone/pitch (high, low), loudness (soft, loud), have a rhythm (fast, slow), tempo/speed (fast, slow), and rhyming sounds. •Use movement images that make you feel or see fast, slow, irregular, familiar, and unusual movement where you might be able to do with your body. •Use tactile images where you can imagine touching something that reminds you of the item to be remembered. Imagine shape (round, square), surface (soft, rough, bumpy), and size (large, small). •Use smell and taste images when you can imagine something familiar or unfamiliar to you that connects to the items to be remembered. •Use emotional images (funny, scary, familiar, loving, dislike) that remind you of the items to be remembered. 	    

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6. Practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Use shorter study time periods (e.g., 10-15 minutes) more often to study with smaller numbers of words (e.g., 5-9 words) during each study period. •Recite aloud when possible with consistent use of the memory cues. •Rehearse with another person who can also test you. •Try to teach the words to someone else. •Record yourself reciting the words and practice while listening to your recording. •Celebrate progress and continue to practice trouble words. 	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Practice 10-15 minutes and test yourself</td> </tr> </table>					Practice 10-15 minutes and test yourself	Practice 10-15 minutes and test yourself	Practice 10-15 minutes and test yourself	Practice 10-15 minutes and test yourself	Practice 10-15 minutes and test yourself
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7. Think about your progress, strategies, and goals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Write down how you did on your test and perhaps use a graph. •Identify progress and improvement. •Think about the strategies and effort used for the test and select strategies that worked and abandon practices that were not effective. •Create improvement goals and plans. •Continue the to work on your new strategies for 30 days. •Decide if you need additional resources or assistance to improve the quality of your learning/work. 										