

How can the way we  
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How can the way we organise our thinking by using mental images, concepts and schemas help us improve our memory Every day we are continuously bombarded with information, but how do we preserve information to recall everything without hardship I will be analysing three main principles on how we can organise our thinking by looking firstly at mental images, concepts and finally schemas. Furthermore, I will look at how this helps us organise our thinking and how this organisation can improve our memory. Firstly, I will contemplate the role of mental images by constructing a mental picture or iconic thought. As adults the use of semantic thought is predominant, where we think in words and meaning.

Nevertheless the evidence of numerous experiments suggests to recall verbal or written information is to construct grand, vivid, comical images of the information to make it more distinctive which provides a cue to recollect information. The more time and effort we spend on constructing a mental picture the more it will fix in our memory. A popular technique named mnemonics is used for improving memory, based on using mental images.

One classical proven mnemonic technique called ??? method of loci??™ developed by the poet Simonides, works by the learner linking bizarre and distinctive mental images of the items they are trying to recall, with a sequence of locations they already know. This strategy can be a powerful aid to memory and can be adapted for other significant situations. I also want to look at a very effective method, proven to prompt our memory which can be used to learn a new language. This is the key word technique which works by associating the word with something you already know by constructing mental images and focusing on their sounds, rhythm and meaning. An <https://assignbuster.com/how-can-the-way-we-organise-our-thinking-by-using-mental-images-concepts-and-schemas/>

illustration of this is given by Spoons et al (2007) to remember a French word *poubelle* (meaning bin in English) by making a picture of a bell being used as a bin, where you are holding your nose due to the unpleasant smell. To reinforce this, researchers Raugh and Atkinson (1975) used also the key word technique where they experimented on two groups of participants whom were asked to learn a list of 60 Spanish words, but only half of them were taught the key word technique. Participants using the key word technique scored an average of 88% compared with only 28% who did not. Secondly, another theory or image known as a concept can also aid and encourage our memory by organising our thoughts and information by developing categories known as concept formation.

Concepts can contain other sub-concepts and even further sub-concepts. Or by way of creating a mental filing system, intentionally implementing relevant storage instructions, having a certain memory being placed in the right filing cabinet, drawer or file can assist and prompt later to retrieve information from long-term memory. To corroborate this, an experiment by Weston Bousfield (1953) asked participants to learn a list of sixty words that could be divided into four categories, in random order. Participants tended to remember them in groups which belong to the same category, for instance, if they recalled apple it would be followed by other fruits. Each bit of stored information cues the next bit by being processed and organised mentally.

Another analysis is from George Mandler (1967), which suggests by organising information we learn it without making any effort to memorise it.

An experiment was carried out where two groups of participants were given <https://assignbuster.com/how-can-the-way-we-organise-our-thinking-by-using-mental-images-concepts-and-schemas/>

a pack of 100 cards and were asked to sort the cards out into groups with words printed on them. Only one group were given instructions to try and memorise the words. This group who had learned the words recalled more words. Finally, a third way of improving the memory and organising our thoughts has the same likeness to concept formation which is also more comprehensive and significant. It's the use of schemas. What are schemas One way best to describe this would be like a mental filing system based on a framework of knowledge about certain objects, situations or even about yourself or a group of people we cluster and develop as a result of our worldly experiences. This concept was proposed by a psychologist named Jean Piaget who died in 1980, having spent over 50 years investigating the way that children developed their cognitive skills by developing schemas.

To illustrate this, if you list everything that you would associate with the word doctors, this would give you your doctor schema. Your doctor schema may include items such as a waiting room, receptionist, the doctor himself, with the stethoscope and blood pressure monitor on his desk. Experiment carried out by John Bransford (1972) et al, demonstrated the role of schemas in our process to retrieve information. In one of his experiments, participants were asked to read a passage and later were asked to recall it as accurately as possible. Only half the participants were given a title.

The participants who were given the title for the passage understood more clearly and were able to recall the information better than the other participants. The title of the passage provides a schema so that the information can be stored logically and remembered effortlessly. I have

briefly explored with the relevant research and evidence to substantiate that <https://assignbuster.com/how-can-the-way-we-organise-our-thinking-by-using-mental-images-concepts-and-schemas/>

the ways we think and organise our thinking by using mental images, concepts and schemas certainly helps to improve our memory and that all three techniques are proven to be significant, whether it is by constructing a mental picture or use of concept formation or information being stored in an organised structure by using schemas. These processes help us retrieve something consciously filed in the long-term memory by thinking of an association or cue applied during learning. Continuous use of a retrieval cue to search for a memory means the stronger the route to the memory and the easier it is to retrieve, which also helps reinforce your learning. Word count: 1, 005` References: Spoons, P, Dyer, E. W , Finlay, L. (2007) Start with psychology, Milton Keynes, The Open University