

# Worksheet

Psychology



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Memory Affiliation: Primary memory is also known as a short term memory is where information is first held for a short time after it has been obtained.

Primary memory is also a gateway to secondary memory. That is to say information to the long term memory passes through a short term or primary memory. One characteristic of primary memory is that information on it can either be retained or discarded. Information retained is moved to the secondary or long term memory. Another characteristic is the number of items retained by this level of memory. Primary memory is estimated to retain seven items but the items can be more or less by two (Weiner & Freedheim, 2003).

Information is first picked from the environment and stored temporarily on the short term memory. However, information can pass the short term memory and enters the long-term memory. When we perceive something, information is first taken, encoded and stored in sensory memory. At this point, information needed is sorted out and sent to primary memory. At the short term memory, information is coded and sorted before it is moved to the secondary memory. Information on the secondary memory resides up to a point where information is retrieved. Retrieval of information occurs when information stored on secondary memory is moved to primary memory. This is done so for us to bring about the information that had taken place previously. However, in case where the process of retrieval is compromised, information retrieved will not match what had happened previously and so the individual experiences false memories. When the process is compromised, it can also impede the retrieval of information leaving the person with nothing to recall (Weiner & Freedheim, 2003).

Many people do not agree on this point but it is possible to retrieve

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unreliable information. Some events are possible to forget but when we encounter some situations, people or object we can recall what had previously happen. It happens because the situations we encounter acts as retrieval cue. However, as time goes by, chances of recalling information that happened many years ago are less. It is because as a person ages, retrieval process of information changes and so previously stored information gets distorted.

One factor that can hinder the reliability of memory is absence of cues. As mentioned above, some events can make us recall what had previously happen. It is because cues which goes on to trigger the memory to recall the last events. There also two other issues that can affect the reliability of memory. Retroactive interference and proactive interference can affect the reliability of memory. For example, consider retroactive interference, a student sitting for an exam who had previously memorized formulation with intention of using them during exam. However, as she prepares for exams, she comes across other formulas in an effort to memorize the new ones; she finds out that it would be difficult to recall the previous formulas. In this case, memorising the new formulas affects the memory of previously stored information (Rathus, 2011).

## References

- Rathus. S. (2011). *Psychology: Concepts and Connections*. Belmont: Cengage Learning.
- Weiner I. B. & Freedheim, D. K. (2003). *Handbook of Psychology, Biological Psychology*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons.