

Tma01



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

TMA 01 How can memory be improved by use of mental images, concepts and schemas

**INTRODUCTION** In this essay about mental images, concepts and schemas I am going to explain how they help us to improve our memory. I am also going to give examples of how we may use these methods everyday.

**MAIN BODY** A mental image is a clue that helps us to recall information and the effort used to fix the image to our memory which helps us to remember making it much more efficient. Large, colourful or bizarre images tend to work best.

There are three main types of memory. Episodic, semantic and procedural. Episodic memory are memories we have from our past, semantic memory of facts and our procedural memory is our memory of how to do things. Semantic thoughts are based on words and meaning whilst iconic thoughts use mental images. Another way of thinking is enactive thought, this is when we represent some things like mental movements such as riding a bike.

Mnemonic is a technique used for improving memory they are based on using mental images. A mnemonic that is commonly used is ??? 30 days hath September, April, June and November, all the rest have 31, except February which has 28.... This is called the ??? method of loci. ??? An ancient mnemonic device called ??? method of loci??™ was developed by the poet Simonides who lived in Ancient Greece.

This method works by the learner linking mental images of the items that they are trying to remember with a sequence of locations that they already know??™ which is referred to in ??? Starting with Psychology??™ (2011) Module text p47, Open University. When learning a new language linking a

mental image has proved effective for helping people grasp a foreign language. This is known as the key word technique.

We can refer to the Raugh and Atkinson experiment where ??? For example take the French word ??? poubelle??™ (pronounced pooh-bell) which translates as ??? bin??™ in English. The first step is to think of an English word or words that sound like the French word or part of the French word. This will give you your key word.

Then you make a mental picture of the key word with the English translation. So in this example you could picture yourself lifting the lid off your bin which has turned into a bell and holding your nose because of the ??? pooh??™.??™ ??? Starting with Psychology??™ (2011) Module text p45, Open University 2013. A second way of improving our memory is using concept formation. This involves putting thoughts and words into categories and these categories then being used as prompts to remember pieces of information. Mandler (1967) showed that we can remember information if we first organise it. Two groups of people were shown 100 cards with different words on.

One group was told only to sort the cards whereas the second group were told to remember as many words as they could, as well as categorising the cards. Mandler interestingly found that there was no difference in the recall percentage between the two groups, suggesting that we categorise information automatically and by doing so we increase our performance of recall. A third way of improving our memory is schemas. It??™s as if your memory is a filing cabinet and each file in the cabinet is a schema (Open

University 2011 p55) For example the concept of a cat is a furry, four legged animal that miaows. So for instance an individual may develop a schema around cats that would include further information, such as; cats are nasty, smelly creatures that miaow and need playing with everyday, or, that they are cute and clever companions that give you a reason to get up in the morning. Schemas can be useful in improving memory, because they organize current knowledge and provide a framework for future understanding. They allow us to take shortcuts in interpreting a huge amount of information; this means you can deal with new situation more efficiently.

Schemas also provide cues to prompt the memory. ??? A lot of the knowledge that we hold in our schemas will be shared with other people who have had similar experiences. However, where our experiences are different, our schemas will also be different??™ ??? Starting with Psychology??™ (2013) Module text, Open University p55??™. John Bransford and Marcia Johnson (1972) carried out one particular experiment in which the participants were asked to read a particular passage and then asked to recall it accurately aftwerwards. Some participants were told the title of the passage and some were only given the passage. ??? Most people report that they have great difficulty in understanding the passage, let alone trying to recall the details.

However, if you reread the passage with the title ??? Washing Clothes??™ in mind, everything should fall into place. The title provides a schema so that the information can be stored appropriately and recalled more easily??™ (Starting with Psychology??™ (2011) Module text, Open University p56)I will

also note that while our schemas help us deal with the world around us more efficiently they can also cause us to be led astray. The information we hold in our schemas may set up expectations to make us feel more comfortable.

Though we use our experience to develop our schemas our schemas may also determine what our experiences will be and they can also lead us to reconstruct our memories so that what we recall fits better with our existing schemas. CONCLUSION Our mind deals with both concepts and mental images, we can't think of one without the other. When we have a thought we have some sort of mental image and when we see for example an object, we automatically have a concept.

Concepts exist because memory is capable of organizing experiences into concepts. It is difficult for us to focus on a concept and not think of related concepts, this is our schema. Therefore it is all of these processes together that store and improve our memories. References??? Starting with Psychology??™ (2011) Module Text, The Open University Word count 997