



Learning How to Learn

Essential Question

How can using effective strategies help me take charge of my learning, in class and out?

Guiding Questions

What are some ways I can organize information to learn it more quickly and effectively? How can using my five senses help boost my memory?

Objectives

- Students will understand the benefits of organizing information they need to learn and use.
- Students will learn about and use several types of graphic organizers.
- Students will learn about several sensory-based learning practices to improve mastery and recall.

Advance Preparation

- Post Do Now and lesson concept map.
- Prepare blank Mind Map on board or chart paper.
- Post laminated graphic organizers in different corners of the classroom, each with several dry-erase markers and an eraser at hand.

Materials/Resources

- PowerPoint slideshow 3.5 (adapt as needed)
- White board, smart board, or chart paper
- Laminated poster-size graphic organizers (provided), dry-erase markers, and erasers

Student Materials

- Text: “Make the Most of Your Reading with SQ3R”
- Text: “Make Your Memory Work Smarter, Not Harder”
- “Your Turn” practice activity sheet

Vocabulary

- Working memory
- Long-term memory
- Mnemonics

Do Now

3 min.

(Slide 1) Student teams respond to the following: “You are the producer of a new television series about professional sports. It is your job to think of interesting topics to explore on your show. With your teammates, brainstorm as many topics as you can think of on the theme of professional sports. One member of your team should act as recorder.”

Introduction (Framing/Overview)

8 min.

1. Slide 3: Student Dedication (30-60 seconds)
2. Ask a reporter from each team to share the team list (slide 4). Write the ideas on the white board, smart board, or chart paper. Create a simple numbered list as all teams report. Do not use a graphic organizer yet.
3. After all teams have reported, ask students if they can identify several broad categories or themes within the list (for example, sports personalities, rules and regulations, important sports events, etc.). Make a separate list of themes.
4. Display the Mind Map graphic organizer you have prepared on the board or chart paper (see slide 5). Write “sports topics” in the center circle of the organizer. Write key themes identified from students’ list in the boxes around the center. If desired, you can also show students how to go to an additional level of detail.
5. Ask students the following questions.
 - *How might using an organizer like this one help the producer?* (slide 6)
 - *How might using an organizer like this one help you in your studies?* (slide 7)
6. Tell students that using graphic organizers can help them understand, organize, categorize, and recall information. Organizers can make their writing, note taking, and studying time more effective. Graphic organizers can help them identify and recall main ideas and supporting details. Organizing information is an important pre-writing step in creating essays, reports, and research papers.
7. Display the concept map slide for the lesson (slide 8). Briefly review the activities indicated. Point out to students that this concept map (and others they have seen introducing previous lessons and units) is one kind of graphic organizer.

Activity 1: SQ3R—A Strategy for Effective Reading

15 min.

1. Direct students' attention to the text "Make the Most of Your Reading with SQ3R" (slide 9). Tell students that this text will recall some of the ideas addressed in yesterday's lesson on pre- and during-reading strategies, but will also introduce what to do *after* reading. Tell students to pay attention and follow along as you read, since they will be organizing the information in various ways afterwards. **Direct Instruction**
2. Read the selection aloud (you can also invite student volunteers to read some paragraphs, if you wish).
3. Call students' attention to the four laminated posters placed in different corners of the room (slide 10). Assign each team to one of the posters. Tell students that they are work together to present the information from the reading in the graphic organizer assigned to them. Give students time to move to the stations and work through entering the information on the poster. **Cooperative Learning Teams**
4. After students have completed the organizers, invite a spokesperson for each group to display their poster and explain why they filled it out as they did (slide 11). Ask appropriate questions to elicit clarification or elaboration. **Student Reports**
5. Ask students what other kinds of graphic organizers they have used in the past (slide 12; e.g., Venn diagrams, timelines, story maps). Wait to display slide 13 *after* students have had a chance to respond. Ask students for which subjects each type of organizer is most useful (for example, timelines are particularly useful for history classes, character webs for studying literature, etc.). **Whole-Class Discussion**

Activity 2: Help Your Memory Work Smarter, Not Harder

15 min.

6. Show slide 14. Tell students graphic organizers are just one way to help our memories work better. Show slide 15 "All Hands On Deck" and have students read it silently. Ask them what they think it means. **Direct Instruction**
7. Tell students they will partner read a text about how the memory works—and how we can help it work better. Introduce the vocabulary terms **working memory**, **long-term memory**, and **mnemonics** to students, clicking through slide 16 to show each term.
8. Direct students to the text "Help Your Memory Work Smarter, Not Harder." Instruct them to partner read this text aloud softly, taking **Partner Reading**

turns (slide 17). Advise them to pay close attention, as they will be using the information to create a graphic organizer of their choice after reading. Circulate among students as they read.

9. After students read the text, have each one create a mind map, graphic organizer, or other visual representation of the content of the text, using the “Your Turn” activity sheet provided (slide 18). Students should decide what type of organizer they wish to create. **Individual Practice**
10. After creating their graphic organizers, students share them with their partners and explain why they chose to organize and represent the information as they did (slide 19). **Pair and Share**

Closure

4 min.

11. Ask students how the information they learned today will help them study and learn in the future (slide 20).
12. Exit ticket: students’ individual graphic organizers can serve as an exit ticket (slide 21; if you have them turn the organizers in, make sure to return them to students promptly so that they can refer to the learning strategies given).

Extensions

If you have extra time, invite student volunteers to share their graphic organizers from Activity 2 with the whole class.

For homework, suggest that students create a graphic organizer for one of their reading assignments in another class.

Make the Most of Your Reading with SQ3R

If you were setting a physical goal for yourself—like wanting to run in a 5K race—you would break down your goal into smaller steps. The first week, you might run one kilometer a day. The next week, you would add a second kilometer. Finally, you would work your way up to running five kilometers. Breaking your goal into steps would lead to success.

You will be more successful reading a difficult or long text if you break the process into steps. Instead of reading a section of your textbook and wondering, “What was that about? Which facts are important? What am I supposed to remember?” you can take steps to master the text.

The SQ3R reading strategy can help you break learning into chunks so that you can understand it and remember it more easily. This method is the granddaddy of study methods; it was invented in 1941, and has been used for many years. Because it actively engages your mind before, during, and after you read, you will comprehend and remember more—and make the most of your study time.

SQ3R stands for **Survey, Question, Read, Recite, and Review**. You have learned how to do many of these steps as before- or during-reading strategies.

Survey: First, **survey** what you are going to read. To survey means to view, skim over, or examine. By predicting what you will find in the text, you will remember more details.

- Look over the text by previewing the headings, illustrations or pictures. What do they say?
- What does the title say?
- What do I know about this subject?
- What do I want to know?
- Read the first paragraph. Then read the last paragraph or summary.



Question: If you ask yourself questions about the text, you will look for—and remember—answers.



- Make the title into a question. Write it in your notebook. This becomes your purpose for reading.
- Are there questions at the end of the chapter or section? Read them.
- Write down any questions that surface as you read.
- Turn headings and subheadings into questions.
- Jot down any unfamiliar vocabulary words.

Read: Be an active reader!

- Try to find the answers to your questions.
- Annotate (if possible) with a highlighter or pencil when you find answers to your questions. If you cannot annotate the text you are reading, jot down notes in your notebook.
- Use context clues to figure out unfamiliar words. If you don't understand a passage, write down your questions.
- Adjust your speed as you read. If the information is not important, speed up. If it is important, or you don't understand it, slow down.



Recite: Talk to yourself about what you've read. (Yes, it is okay to talk to yourself. But if you are using the method during class, try to talk to yourself in your head rather than out loud!)



- Close your eyes and think about what you've read. Summarize.
- Try to answer the questions you had before reading. Reread to answer your questions.
- Test your understanding. What were the main points?

Review: Look back over the text to make sure you understand the main points.

- Have you answered your purpose for reading? Summarize information by discussing it with a partner, writing a summary, or creating a graphic organizer.
- Think or write about how this information can apply to your life.
- Review your notes within 24 hours, and again a few days later. You will remember much, much more if you do this! Don't wait until the night before a test to cram!



Help Your Memory Work Smarter, Not Harder

How many times have you taken a test and wished you could remember more of what you studied? We all struggle sometimes with faulty memories and overloaded brains. But it IS possible to remember more of what you study—and improve your school success!



Memory works in different ways. When you need a few items at the store, you may not write them down. You can remember long enough to get the things you need! But a week later, you probably won't remember everything you bought. Your shopping list was in your **working memory**. Your brain stored that information for a short time—just long enough to use it.

Now think about a favorite song from your playlist. It's much longer than the shopping list—but you probably know every word by heart! Why? It's easier to remember song lyrics than shopping lists—or the information you need for tomorrow's history test—for many reasons. The same principles will help you master knowledge for school, and move it into your long-term memory to use it in life.



Over and Over

You listen to your favorite songs over and over again. **Repetition** moves the lyrics into your brain! The more often you go over something you need to learn, the more likely you are to remember it.

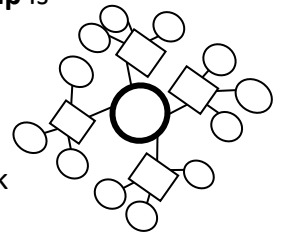
Yet reading a paragraph over and over may not help—it's boring, so your brain might go into sleep mode. You want to repeat the material in different formats, spaced out in time, and use it in various ways. What are some fun ways to repeat what you learn and move it to your long-term memory?

The Power of Pictures

You probably watch video clips of your favorite songs. Seeing a mental picture or mind movie helps wake up your memory to recall the words that match it. This is why graphic organizers are such a great way to study. And guess what—you can make your own!

To remember events from a history lesson, put them in order on a **timeline** or **sequence chart**. Or, use a **cause-and-effect chart** to show how one event leads to another. A **mind map** is another good way to show relationships between ideas, events, or people.

Drawing pictures—even stick figures—also helps put your visual memory to work. Tiny sketches will help you learn new vocabulary terms. If you need to learn the body parts of an insect for science class, copy or trace a picture from your textbook and label the parts.



Say the Words



Rhythm, melody, and rhyme—these are some features you may enjoy in the songs on your playlist. Those sound clues play a big role in making songs memorable, especially if you like to sing along! You can put the same features to work to remember things you study.

Always **talk to yourself** when you study, even softly, under your breath. When words come out of your mouth, they trace new paths that stay in your memory for a long time. This is especially true if you come back to say them again and again, taking breaks in between.

Mnemonics are special techniques to help you remember. To learn an ordered list, you can make up a sentence using words that begin with the same letters. Maybe you have to learn the first six American presidents: Washington, Adams, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Adams. A sentence like this one: **Why Are Jugglers Munching Magic Apples?**—helps you remember where each president fits in the list. Make up sentences like this to learn names of planets, countries, or steps in math.

Rhymes and **songs** are also great memory aids. Maybe in elementary school you learned “Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November...” to learn which months are shorter than others. Create your own songs, poems, or raps to move new knowledge into your long-term memory.

Finally, if you have a **study buddy**, question each other on material you’re learning. Talking with a friend and putting information into words helps make it stick in your brain.



Get Moving!

Do you ever dance along while you listen to your tunes? Those moves also help you remember the song lyrics. Getting your body involved is another way to create strong memory paths.



Start by moving your hands. Writing things down by hand strengthens your memory better than typing on a device. This happens when you create graphic organizers and draw what you study. And studies suggest that creating flash cards by hand—and reviewing them regularly—is a better way to study than using an online app!

What are some other ways to learn by doing? Study partners or a study group can create a short skit to act out an important event they’re learning about in history, or a crucial scene from a novel. Even if you study by yourself, you can act out a scene in front of a mirror. You can represent a scientific model—such as the structure of a cell—using small household items.



Make It Personal



You also remember songs because they have special meaning for you. People remember things that touch their own lives. As you study, make personal connections with the topic. Did an event in history affect people in your family? Could new nutrition facts help you make wiser choices? Do you relate to the characters’ experience in a novel or play? Thinking about things like this will make new knowledge meaningful—and memorable.

When you move information into your long-term memory, it becomes available so that you can use it both now and in the future. It will help you succeed not just on tests, but in life. Strategies that use ALL your senses—sight, sound, touch, and even your feelings—can make long-term learning work for you.

Name _____

Your Turn

Use the space below to create a graphic organizer (or a picture display) to help you remember the important points in the text “Make Your Memory Work Smarter, Not Harder.”