



Mnemonics for Study

Fiona McPherson

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A successful student uses effective strategies

Being a successful student is far more about being a smart user of effective strategies than about being 'smart'. In fact it is possible to predict how well a student will do simply on the basis of their use of study strategies.

Mnemonics is one class of study strategy that is of proven effectiveness, but (like only too many effective strategies!) is used far too little. Despite many studies showing the effectiveness of mnemonic strategies, they remain the least frequently used formal memory aid used by students.

Perhaps the main reason for this is that their effectiveness is not intuitively obvious -- truly, no one really believes that these 'tricks' can so remarkably improve memory until they try them for themselves.

But while mnemonics do not help you understand your material, they do help you remember those many details you need to achieve expertise in a topic -- details such as the names of things, technical words, lists of principles.

Moreover, mnemonics can help you remember tags or labels that allow you to access clusters of meaningful information -- for example, headings of a speech or main points for exam essays. For both these reasons, mnemonics are a valuable assistance to building up expertise in a subject, as well as in helping you 'cram' for an exam.

This concise book covers

- acronyms & acrostics
- rhythm & rhyme
- keyword strategies (including the face-name association method)
- the story method
- the loci or journey method
- the pegword method
- the link method
- coding mnemonics

While you can find basic information on these various mnemonic strategies in many books and websites, *Mnemonics for Study* goes far beyond the same tired descriptions, using the latest research to explain exactly how these strategies work and are best used.

The hardest part of permanently improving your memory is changing your habits and becoming an effective user of effective strategies. The best way to do this, research has shown, is through understanding how different strategies work, and when and how to use them. Through examples and exercises, that is what this book aims to teach you.

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