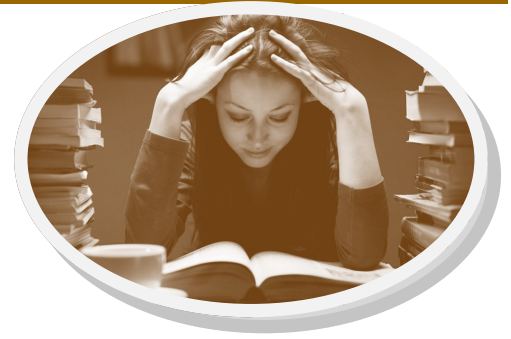


Study Savvy

Brain Power

LET'S START WITH YOUR BRAIN.



A pretty amazing machine. In the same way it helps to understand your I-phone in order to get the most use for your money, it also helps to understand how your brain works, in order to get the most benefit from your study. Your brain has **3 main types of memory**:

- **SENSORY MEMORY** is the most active, but shortest-lived type of memory. Sensory memory is like foot-print impressions left on sandy beaches that are quickly washed away. Sensory memory comes from moment-by-moment stimuli of one or more of our 5 senses: hearing, sight, smell, taste, and touch. The stimulus CAN be forgotten within 200 milliseconds, unless a **CHOICE** is made to further process it. When a choice is made to further process a stimulus, your **SHORT-TERM** memory goes to work!
- **SHORT-TERM MEMORY** is like the “Etch-a-Sketch” of the brain (with very little “R.A.M.”). In general, short-term memory will hold only about 7 items of information for 15-60 seconds. As new items enter short-term memory, others get dumped. Like sensory memory, short-term memory is a necessary STEP in the memory process. An example of the function of short term memory is that right now your short-term memory is holding the beginning of this sentence in your mind while you read the rest, and you process the complete message. **REHEARSING information** you process in your short-term memory establishes “entries” in your **LONG-TERM MEMORY**.
- **LONG-TERM MEMORY** is the brain’s ‘multi-terabyte sized filing system’ that registers the thoughts you want to keep for later use. **REHEARSING INFORMATION, and making MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS with it, are actions that “log” information into long-term memory so that you can use it when you need it—THE GOAL OF STUDYING!!!!**



Brain Power and STUDYING

WHICH TYPE OF “MEMORY” ARE YOU COUNTING ON MOST?



- Simply sitting through classes letting all the stimuli come and go means counting on **SENSORY MEMORY** to get by.—NOT GONNA WORK! No **CHOICE** is made to focus on information long enough to process it. And, like the footprints on the sandy beach, the information dissolves as quickly as it came. **SENSORY MEMORY, by itself, is not enough.**



- Focusing on the stimuli presented in class and in text books, and taking good notes along the way equates to engaging **SHORT TERM MEMORY**. **A GREAT STEP! But SHORT-TERM MEMORY is also not enough.**



- **Focusing** on classroom instruction, **studying** text books and other material, **connecting** NEW information with things you **ALREADY KNOW**, **discovering** WHY the information is useful to you, **ORGANIZING** the information in concise meaningful ways, **completing** homework assignments, and **reviewing** the material are actions that will move information into **LONG-TERM MEMORY** so that it can be recalled for use at will—**INCLUDING ON TESTS! LONG-TERM MEMORY is the PLACE TO BE!**

(see other side for **STUDY STRATEGIES** that help get the information logged in your **LONG-TERM MEMORY!**)

Make>connections>Make>connections>Make>connections

Study Strategies



STUDY DO'S and DON'T'S

- DO have a regular place to study away from distractions.
- DO try to schedule time to study when you are not sleepy and not likely to be interrupted.
- Make study sessions 30 –60 minutes in length, then reward yourself with a break.
- DO memorize concepts in “chunks” that relate to each other. Making connections with your material helps strengthen it in your long-term memory.
- AVOID CRAMMING. Cramming is a short term memory exercise that will not last long enough for the test!

Memorization strategies:

1. *Acronyms: using the first letter of items you need to remember, and arranging them in a familiar word.*
2. *Sentence acrostics: i.e. My Dear Aunt Sally (multiply, divide, add, subtract)*
3. *Rhymes, rhythm and songs: speaking what you are memorizing to a steady beat, or singing it to a familiar tune.*
4. *Visualizing/method of loci: Imagine attaching words or concepts you need to know to familiar objects you see daily. As you visualize the object, recall the concept.*

Ozarka College Student Success Center

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Our goal is to help you achieve YOUR goal!

BEFORE CLASS

Complete your reading and written assignments so that you will have a preview of the topics to be covered in class (raises your ‘antennae’ for better listening and reception of info during class).

- ⇒ Preview the reading material by scanning the bolded section headings to begin to understand what KEY CONCEPTS will be covered.
- ⇒ Preview the questions at the end of the chapter, so you will already know what you are expected to discover in your reading.
- ⇒ Read the material, looking for information that explains the KEY CONCEPTS.
- ⇒ Underline KEY WORDS and/or, take written notes over the key concepts on a separate sheet of paper.
- ⇒ MAKE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS (see below)

DURING CLASS

- ⇒ Take good notes in class (see suggestions on Note Taking Keys publication)
- ⇒ Ask questions in class when concepts are unclear
- ⇒ MAKE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS (see below)
- ⇒ Participate in group work and peer review sessions by listening and giving feedback on the topics presented to you by your instructor.

AFTER CLASS

- ⇒ Reorganize/rewrite notes taken in class, and fill in missing information as much as possible.
- ⇒ Review/REHEARSE your notes often.
- ⇒ Using your reading notes and notes taken in class, make a study guide to help you prepare for tests.
- ⇒ Make flash cards to study from (write the concept/question on one side, and the explanation/answer on the other).
- ⇒ MAKE MEANINGFUL CONNECTIONS with the material. Ask and answer questions about the material: “Why is it important?” “How does this fit with what I already know?” “How are 2 concepts similar?” “How are they different?” “How can I organize this information to make it easier to recall—a table? A graph? A flow chart?”
- ⇒ Study in groups and quiz each other