5.1: Lesson 5.1: Memory Model and Techniques

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This lesson incorporates a view of the memory cycle from initial input to long-term storage, along with memory principles and techniques.

For starters, take a pre test to assess what memory techniques you already use.
An Information Processing Model

Once information has been encoded, we have to retain it. Our brains take the encoded information and place it in storage. Storage is the creation of a permanent record of information.

In order for a memory to go into storage (i.e., long-term memory), it has to pass through three distinct stages: Sensory Memory, Short-Term Memory, and finally Long-Term Memory. These stages were first proposed by Richard Atkinson and Richard Shiffrin (1968). Their model of human memory is based on the belief that we process memories in the same way that a computer processes information.

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UNIT 5, EXERCISE 1.1

While reading through the article linked here, “Atkinson-Shiffrin model of memory” answer the following questions.

SENSORY INPUT
1. If you are just walking along somewhere and pass by the usual sights, sounds, smells, etc., about how long do you think you would remember what you just took in by your senses? (Note: nothing out of the ordinary happens.)
2. If you do nothing at all to help you remember what you just took in by your senses, about how many discrete units (pieces) of data (or input, i.e., sights, sounds, smells, etc.) would you be able to remember for the brief period of time?

WORKING MEMORY (ALSO KNOWN AS SHORT TERM MEMORY)
3. Now, if you immediately begin to try to remember the input for later (for example, you notice you just passed a shop you’ve been meaning to go to, or you smell something really good coming from a restaurant that reminds you of something you like), about how many items could you then remember?
4. How long could you keep them in your memory by just using one or two memory techniques, such as associating them with something (like a memory)?

LONG TERM MEMORY
5. About how many items can you keep in your “permanent” memory storage?
6. How long can you keep them there?

RELATED QUESTIONS
7. Why is “cramming” new information the night before a test not a good idea? Go beyond the information in the article to common sense issues.

UNIT 5, EXERCISE 1.2

“Nine Types of Mnemonics for Better Memory”

By Dennis Congos, University of Central Florida

1. Read 9 Types of Mnemonics for Better Memory and transfer the information on a Cornell-styled note taking form.
EXTRA CREDIT: On a separate piece of paper (or on the downloaded version of the article), complete the worksheet that follows the article, “Have a mnemonics party.” DO ANY TEN of the items. (5 points).

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