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### Study Factsheet Series - No 4

## Memory Tricks for Studying Smarter

### **Repetition**

Reading a fact over and over helps it stick in your mind. Most people have to read things 5 times before they remember them. Writing it out and saying it aloud also helps.

### **Flashcards**

Write a word or phrase on one side of a small card and the definition on the other. Make a pile of these and keep them handy – you can use them during short waits or get others to test you.

### **The divided page**

Write the words or concepts you need to learn in a column on the right side of the page, and the definition on the left hand side. Cover the definition and test yourself.

### **Visualise it**

Draw a diagram and practice labelling it. Draw a flow chart to connect facts in a certain order. Put the facts in different shapes and colours to help you recall it later.

### **Imagine a room**

Picture a room or outdoor area in your mind and walk around it, placing the different facts you need to remember on different objects – e.g. a word or phrase on the TV, one on the coffee table, one of the lamp, etc. Then go back and take your imaginary walk again, seeing if you can recall the information as you see the objects. You can use different rooms for different topics. You could also physically put labels on things around a room at home then recall it later.

### **Acronyms**

Write a list of key words that remind you of facts you need to learn for a topic. List their first letters down a page then make up a sentence or rhyme that fits the first letters, to give you a cue for recalling the real words.

e.g. Every Good Boy Deserves Fruit – helps to recall the lines in the treble clef of sheet music – EGBDF.

### **Making sense of it**

Finding meaning or usefulness in what you are learning can help you retain it.

e.g. If you are learning about the parasympathetic nervous system, think of how your hand reacts when you touch a hotplate!

## Write your own song

Putting the facts to music and singing it helps you to retain it. You may choose a tune you already know, even a nursery rhyme, or make up your own.

## Make a poem

Rhyming can help things stick in your head as well. Make up a poem that connects the facts or a nonsense poem that simply lists facts you need to recall.

e.g. '30 days has September, April, June and November'

## Make a story

Link unrelated things by making up a story which includes those facts. It doesn't have to make sense, and in fact if it's silly you may remember it better.

e.g. I took a short cut through Barton on the way to Deakin, then my mate Chris Watson said Can't you Reid? If you want to be a Fisher so you can Cook us some bream tonight you'd be better off avoiding Hughes and go to the lake on your way up to Bruce'.

This story contains the surnames of the first 8 Prime Ministers of Australia.

## Tell a friend

Explain what you need to learn to someone else. This gives you practice at recalling it and can help you to make more sense of it. It also reinforces the material in your mind when you say it out loud.

## Hot Tips

All these methods will work better if you rehearse them lots and test your recall before you go into the exam.

When you are doing the test, write the acronym or draw a mini flow chart in a spare corner of the paper or say the poem or song to yourself silently.

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