



***Learning Support Service***

**Some Ideas for Memory Training**

1. **ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE MAINLY VISUAL MEMORY**

a. **Kim's Game**

- i. ***Original Game:*** several objects on a tray (the number depending upon the pupils' ability) exposed for a specified length of time and then covered. Pupils are required to state (or write down) the names of as many of the objects as they can remember.
- ii. ***Variations:***
  - all objects begin with the same sound
  - objects in pairs e.g. knife and fork, pencil and sharpener etc.
  - objects of different colours - the colour to be included in the answer
  - all objects the same but different in shape and/or size and/or colour e.g. crayons, bricks, beads etc.
  - one object removed after the initial exposure - the missing object to be named (this is very successful with sweets - pupils take turns and say which sweet the previous player has eaten)

N.B. if the objects are named before covering, more are usually remembered. When pictures are used instead of objects, many more variations are possible and the game could be used for more specific purposes:

- vocabulary extension and word building
- number and letter recognition
- shapes (make a picture using the shapes you saw)
- counting - "how many?"

b. **Pelmanism**

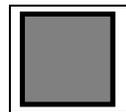
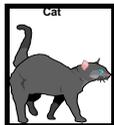
- i. ***Original Game:*** a set of playing cards face down on a table. Pupils turn over two cards in an attempt to find a match. A pupil who finds a match has another go.
- ii. ***Variations:***
  - as above but with matching picture cards instead of playing cards

- matching colour cards
- matching picture to initial letter sounds
- matching opposites
- matching word to picture
- matching number and set
- matching common sight words
- matching easily confused sight words e.g. where, were, what, why, etc.
- matching pictures which are not the same, but could be justifiably connected e.g. ice-cream/apple house/garden
- categories of matching pictures e.g. furniture, food, clothes etc.
- words which pupils often reverse e.g. saw/was, from/form, felt/left, no/on, dog/god etc. - pupils find the matching word
- matching pictures which begin with the same initial (or , more difficult, final/middle) sound e.g. bat, butterfly: net, cat: pet, ten)

## 2. ACTIVITIES TO IMPROVE VISUAL SEQUENTIAL MEMORY

The objectives of the following activities is to remember ten pictures or objects in sequence from left to right.

- Two picture cards only are placed on the table. The child names the pictures. An additional card is placed down on the right and the first card is turned over to conceal its picture. The child names all three pictures. Continue as above until all ten cards can be named from memory.
- Two picture cards are placed down and a **silly** connection between them is thought of, for example:



the cat has a box on his tail.....



...and he is up a tree with a circle on his head

Continue until all ten cards can be remembered in sequence. When the child can remember the sequence, one card is turned over so that the child can see all but one of the pictures. He must then name the missing picture.

- The above can be played with objects instead of pictures e.g. pencil, paper clip, rubber etc., and a silly association is made between them. One object is then removed for the child to name, by remembering the sequence. A space

can be left where the object should be or, more difficult, the space is closed up and the child must then go through the remembered sequence until he finds the missing object.

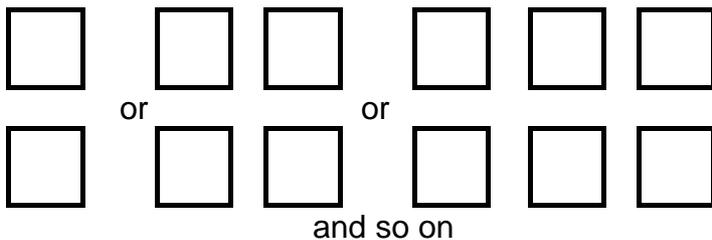
- d. The child remembers a sequence he is familiar with e.g. a path through his own house - front door, hall, living room, dining room etc. (Ten stations in all). Presented with ten pictures to remember the sequence, the child finds a ridiculous association between the first picture and - say - the front door e.g. an elephant hanging on the door, an ice-cream stuck to the wall in the hall, a book hanging from the light in the living room, and so on.

When all the sequences are remembered, the child may then be asked:-

- i. what was the third picture?
- ii. what comes after the frog?
- c. what comes before the iron?
- d. what is in the living room? etc.

### 3. VISUAL MEMORY AND SPATIAL AWARENESS

Pictures are placed in a pattern:



- a. the child first names all pictures and then one is turned over for the child to recall, remembering its position.
- b. use solid objects, instead of pictures, as above and remove one object for the child to name.

Useful vocabulary can be introduced here if desired e.g. top/bottom, left/right/middle, first, second, third etc.

### 4. VISUAL MOTOR MEMORY

Hold up a simple drawing and then ask the child to reproduce it without referring to the picture.

- a. Repetition of simple sequences such as numbers, letters, days of the week, months, seasons, colours of the rainbow etc.

A visual variation would be to hold up a sequence of numbers or letters briefly and ask the child to repeat them either orally or by writing them down.

Use mnemonics with older children to help their memory for common sequences e.g. **R**ichard of **Y**ork **g**ave **b**attle **i**n **v**ain (colours of the rainbow).

b. **Repeat and Add On**

This includes all the games where players take it in turns to repeat a sequence and add to it:

- i. I went to market and bought some apples, bananas, cabbage.....  
I went to the zoo and saw an antelope, bear, camel .....  
My grandmother had a cat; it was an active cat; active, beautiful cat, active beautiful cuddly cat.....

Sequences may follow the alphabet, be action words, colours, numbers, children's names, adjectives, categories etc., and could be asked in isolation or in various combinations e.g. one apple, two bananas, a pink anorak, red boots.....

- ii. finding out names e.g. my name is .....: he is .....: all round the group
- iii. putting an action to a name e.g. my name is ..... and I can clap my hands: he is ..... and he can stamp his foot.....
- iv. telling stories, each member of the group repeating previous sentences and adding to them
- v. one child makes up a sentence; the next must listen out for the last mentioned word and begin his sentence with that word e.g. "It will soon be Christmas". "Christmas pudding is nice with custard". "Custard is easy to make". "Make me a cake as fast as you can".

c. **Learning by Heart**

Children should be encouraged to learn tongue twisters, poems, parts in plays, nursery rhymes etc., off by heart.

d. **Rhythms**

- i. clap, tap or stamp out a rhythm for the child to repeat
- ii. extend above by producing the rhythm or sound (using assorted instruments) out of the child's sight
- iii. hum, sing or play a sequence of notes for the child to repeat

e. **Actions**

- i. perform a sequence of actions for a child to repeat

- ii. give child a series of verbal instructions to be remembered and followed e.g. open the window, then bring that book and put it on the chair
- iii. extend above to include taking a message, verbally, and bringing back a verbal answer
- iv. repeating patterns using whole body positions e.g. one child sits, the next stands, the next kneels - repeat the pattern around the group

f. **Auditory Discrimination**

- i. teacher recites a well known nursery rhyme - children must listen out for wrong/silly words
- ii. class are told to listen out for a particular word which the teacher will say some time in the morning. The first child to hear the word is rewarded
- iii. using tape recorded sounds, ask the child to name the sounds heard in the correct sequence
- iv. ask the child to think of a sound, make it and then clap every time he hears it in a series of words said by the teacher
- v. give the child three or more pictures which he sees and then places face down; one of the pictures is then described by the teacher for the child to find. This activity can be extended to shapes, colours, letters or words

5. **MEMORY & THE SENSE OF TOUCH, TASTE and SMELL**

a. **Touch**

- i. feelie bags of different shape or colour with various objects in them: child has to remember which bag contains the marble, coin etc.
- ii. a number of objects are put into a bag for the child to identify and remember when the bag is removed
- iii. a sequence of sandpaper letters or digits is presented to a blindfolded child for him to repeat orally or recreate from a selection of letters or digits

b. **Taste**

A sequence of objects to be tasted can be prepared, for a blindfolded child to recall.

c. **Smell**

A sequence of objects to be sniffed may similarly be prepared.