

Teach Your Child The Responsibility Of Remembering



Some people think that a good memory is something you're born with. But the research says that's not true. Almost every student can be taught to remember key facts and concepts. Students can learn to remember to take their homework to school—and to remember that they're supposed to be home at six o'clock.

Here's how you can encourage your child to accept the responsibility of remembering important things.

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Teach Your Child Skills For Remembering

Here are three ways to help your child remember things before he leaves the house in the morning. Teach him to:

1. **Stop at the door.** Before your child leaves for school, teach him to stop for a minute. Ask, "Do I have everything I'll need today?"
2. **Use the "head-to-toe checklist."** Before your child goes anywhere, have him run through a checklist: "My hat's on my head. My coat's on my body. My gloves are on my hands. My boots are on my feet. My backpack's on my back."
3. **Write it down.** Have your child make a checklist of everything he needs to take to school on a typical day—and post it by the front door. Use self-sticking notes for special items—"Don't forget the permission slip for the field trip."

BREAK

It Into

CHUNKS!

Remember, to make any large project easier, break it down into smaller, more manageable chunks. Rather than trying to study math for three hours on one night, it's better to have your child spread studying over several days.

So when your child is trying to memorize difficult material, have her schedule several short study sessions. That works much better than one "cram" session. For example, have her schedule 10 minutes each day to review spelling words. Don't let her wait until the night before the test.



Let Your Child Be the Teacher

Sometimes, the best way for your child to remember something is by teaching it to you. As your child is studying for a test, let him make up his own test and ask you the questions. You'll both learn something!

The same idea works on nearly any subject. Something happens as you explain a subject to someone else. The "teacher" understands it better, too. Try it!



Making Associations Really Works!

One of the best ways to remember anything is by "associating" what your child *wants to remember* with other things she *already knows*.

Even silly or crazy associations can work. To remember that Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon, have your child picture a cartoon of a strong, muscular arm on the moon. Help your child make up useful associations—even whole stories—about nearly anything she wants to remember.

Mnemonics Aid Memory Skills, Improve Grades

A mnemonic (ni-MAHN-ik) device is anything that helps a person remember something. For example, to learn the colors of the spectrum, children may use the acronym ROY G. BIV (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet). Similarly, the poem "30 days hath September" is a mnemonic device for remembering the number of days in each month.

As your child begins to take more challenging courses, mnemonics can be even more valuable. If she's studying geography, for example, she can remember the names of the Great Lakes by remembering HOMES.

Help your child develop her own mnemonics. When she has to memorize a list, have her try writing the words in order in a vertical column down the side of the paper. Then use the first letter of each word to make a new word, phrase or sentence that ties all the items together.

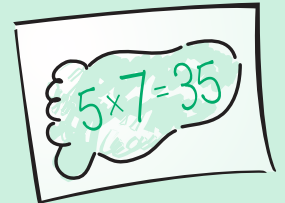


H = Huron
O = Ontario
M = Michigan
E = Erie
S = Superior

Other Fun Ways to Memorize:

Here are more fun ways to help your child memorize facts:

- **Draw footprints on scrap paper.** Make lots of copies. Write a fact on each and place the footprints throughout the house. Move them each day. Although $5 \times 7 = 35$ may have been in the hall yesterday, today it might show up in the kitchen.
- **Write the facts on self-stick notes.** Place the notes in the refrigerator, inside the cookie jar, in lunch boxes and anyplace else you can think of.
- **Encourage your child to use an audio recorder** to "dictate" notes to himself as he studies. Simply putting the ideas into his own words in order to "tell" them to the recorder can help him remember.



Remembering Is a Skill

Remembering is simply another useful skill for students. Practicing at home is one of the best ways to develop the skill of remembering. It's fun and it can result in better grades, too!

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