

**Senior Moments:
How to Improve Your Memory**

Dr Melissa Slavin

Remember this shopping list

- Milk
- Sausages
- Peas
- Flour
- Oranges
- Steak
- Cheese
- Apple
- Yoghurt
- Sugar

Remembering people's names

Most of us forget the name of the person to whom we are introduced, because:

- **we could not hear it clearly**
- **we heard several names at the same time**
- **we were too busy concentrating on the person or something else to learn it**

Remembering people's names

- **Input - listen attentively**
- **Try to associate the name with distinctive feature, eg Bill Brown at hairdresser's- he has a beard - imagine him being presented with a BILL for having the BEARD dyed BROWN**
- **Don't use clothes or glasses as distinctive feature, rather build, face shape, nose, etc**

Remembering people's names

- Repeat name aloud
- Distinctive enduring feature: observe appearance closely
- Associated distinctive feature with name
- Rehearse and self-test

RDAS “*R, das* the way to remember names”

Remembering what you read

- **Pause at the end of each chapter and, reflect, perhaps discuss it with a friend**
- **If important, use one of the methods discussed before**



Ways to improve memory

- **Chunking**
- **Acronyms, first letter cueing**
- **Narrative chaining**
- **Method of loci**
- **Visual imagery**

What was on that shopping list?

Chunking: what was that shopping list?

- *Dairy*
 - Milk
 - Yoghurt
 - Cheese
- *Staples*
 - Sugar
 - Flour
- *Butcher*
 - Steak
 - Sausages
- *Greengrocer*
 - Apple
 - Oranges
 - Peas

Acronyms: COMFY PASS'S

- **C** heese
- **O** ranges
- **M** ilk
- **F** lour
- **Y** oghurt
- **P** eas
- **A** pples
- **S** ugar
- **S** teak
- **S** ausages

Narrative chaining

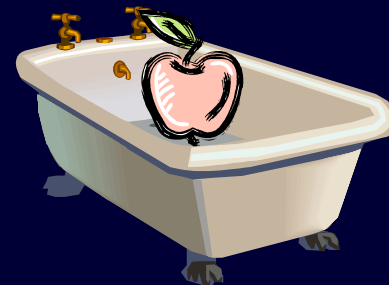
- The dairymaid had a cow that gave *milk* through one teat, *yoghurt* through another, and *cheese* through a third.
- Along came a butcher and he wanted to buy the cow to make *sausages* and *steak*.

Narrative chaining, continued

- *No, no* said the dairymaid and hurried away with the cow to a field where *peas* were growing under *orange* and *apple* trees
- Then she went home and took out some *flour* and *sugar* to make a cake.

Method of Loci

- Choose a familiar place, eg your house, and put the various items to remember in different spots as you would walk in and through the house



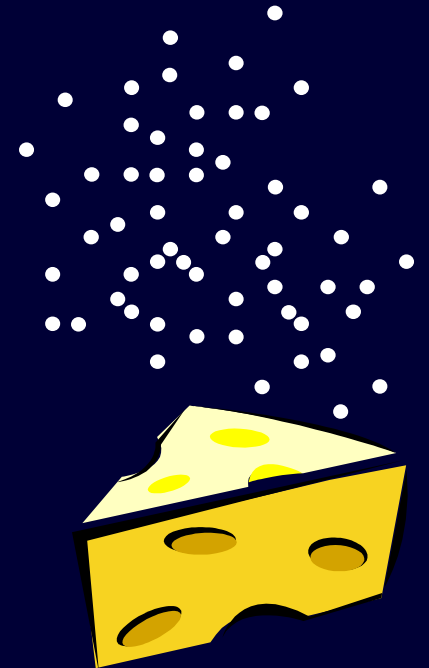
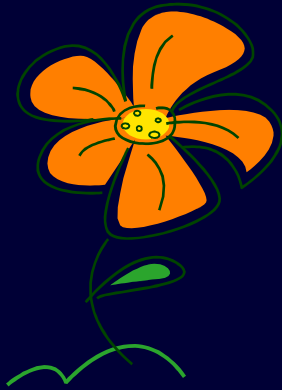
Visual Imagery



Visual Imagery



Visual Imagery



Other tips

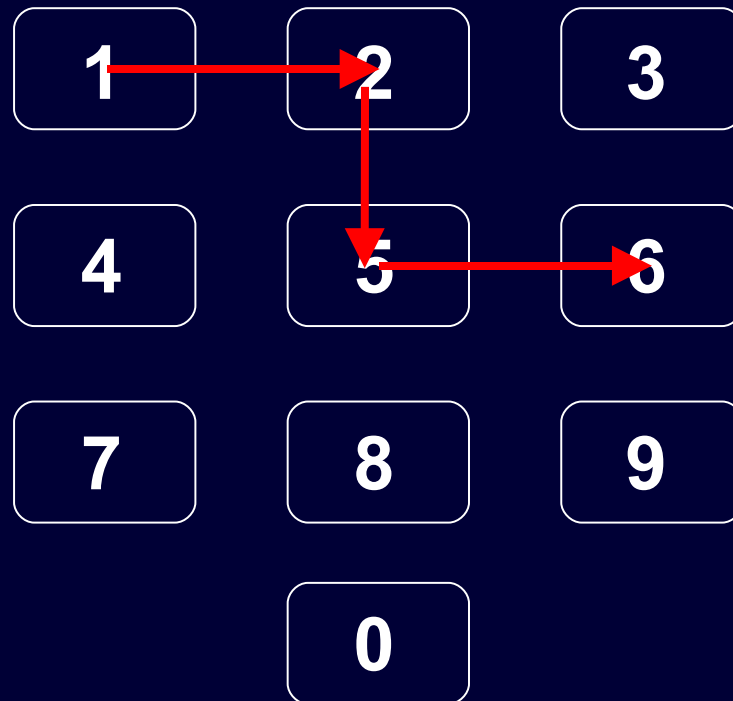
- **Pay attention, focus**
- **Heighten your sensory awareness, eg a tune**
- **Emotional aware**
- **Stay motivated**
- **Go slow - takes longer with age**
- **Stay organised**
- **Keep things in the same place**

New Technology: Remembering Your Pin or Passwords

- **Make it meaningful eg friend's date of birth**
- **Use the same numbers for everything**
- **Association eg Westpac: use Wendy's date of birth**
- **Phone numbers: chunk into pairs**
- **Email passwords: use a theme: eg your kids' hobbies**

New Technology: Remembering Your Pin or Passwords

- Make your PIN easy to visualise



Finally.....

- **Thanks for coming today**
- **Thanks to all those who have participated in the Memory & Ageing Study**
- **Enquiries to memory@unsw.edu.au**