

Acronyms

Object of the Activity: To introduce the child to acronyms. Acronyms are words formed from the first letters of the information to be remembered. Examples of acronyms are:

BOGOF which is used as a marketing slogan meaning **Buy One Get One Free**

SCUBA used in diving for **Self Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus**

HOMES to remember the great lakes of North America **Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Eric, Superior.**

The word doesn't have to be a real word but it must be able to be pronounced, e.g. **RADAR** is a word introduced by the military for the detection equipment **RADio Detection And Ranging.** The name **ROY G. BIV** is a way of remembering the colours of the rainbow (**Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo and Violet**).

Equipment: Pen and paper

How to Play: Help the child make up their own acronyms for lists they need to remember. They work best if they are a real or funny word or a silly non-word, e.g. to remember **Red sauce, Sausages, Carrots, Apples** write down the first letters of each item **RSCA** and see if they can be rearranged into a word, in this case **CARS.** Also practise with any lists the child needs to remember for school such as the four types of fossils in geography: **Actual remains, Petrified, Imprint and Moulds** gives the letters **APIM** which can be rearranged into **PAIM**, which is a funny non-word that sounds like 'pain'. Tell the child you will ask them later if they can remember the list from the acronym. Work on another acronym and then ask the child what the previous acronym stood for.

To Make It Easier: Stick with lists of three items where one of the items starts with a vowel (a, e, i, o, u).

To Make It Harder: Give the child longer lists to remember.

Reinforcement: Give praise for any attempt to make a word and use that word to recall the items.

Memory Magic Activity 6.1

Acrostics

Object of the Activity: To introduce the child to acrostics. Acrostics are sentences made from the first letter of each word to be remembered in a list, e.g. the colours of the rainbow (**red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet**) give the letters **ROYGBIV.** These letters can be used to form a sentence such as **Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain.** The points of a compass (**North, East, South and West**) can be remembered by the acrostic **Never Eat Shredded Wheat.** Alternatively acrostics can be used to help remember how to spell words by turning each letter of the word into a word in a sentence: e.g. **Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants** to spell **BECAUSE.**

Equipment: Pen and paper.

How to Play: Use any list that the child needs to learn for school or make up shopping lists. Help the child write down the first letters for each word and think of a silly sentence to help them remember those letters.

To Make It Easier: Start the sentence for the child so that they have to think of only one or two silly words to make the sentence fun and memorable.

To Make It Harder: Give the child some difficult words to learn the spelling for and ask them to make up acrostics to help them remember the letters in the right order.

Reinforcement: Give lots of praise and encouragement for any attempt to chunk the information into a sentence and attempt to recall the information to be remembered.

Memory Magic Activity 6.2

Rhyme

Object of the Activity: introduce the child to the idea of using rhyme to remember information. Rhyme can be used to aid memory in jingles and songs. Examples include:

- Recalling how many days are in each month 'Thirty days has September, April, June and November. All the rest have 31 except for February alone. When leap year comes one in four, February has one day more.'
- Recalling historical dates 'In fourteen hundred and ninety two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.'
- Recalling spelling rules 'I before E except after C or when sounded as A like in neighbour or weigh.'

Equipment: Pen and paper.

How to Play: Help the child to make up rhymes for any lists or spelling rules they may need to remember. Help the child to write them down.

To Make It Easier: Put a list to a known nursery rhyme song, e.g. learning the alphabet to the tune of 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star'.

To Make It Harder: Ask the child to make up a poem about the information to be remembered.

Reinforcement: Praise all attempts at using rhyme to recall information. This is quite a difficult mnemonic to use.

Memory Magic Activity 6.3

Make a Journey

Object of the Activity: To introduce the child to the idea of visualising a journey in a well known place to help them recall a list of items in order.

Equipment: A random selection of pictures from the categories provided. Pen and paper.

How to Play: Ask the child to draw a map of their house. Give him/her a selection of four or five pictures and help the child to place them in different parts of the house. Now ask the child to put their finger at the front door and to 'walk' their fingers through the front door and see the first item. Help them to think where this item might be, e.g. on the door mat, on the sofa, etc. depending on the layout of their house. Carry on 'walking' through the house noticing each picture item on the way. Now remove the pictures and ask the child to 'walk' their finger through the house again and to try and recall the pictures as they go.

To Make It Easier: Take only one or two pictures away leaving the others in place as reminders and see if the child can recall these.

To Make It Harder: Take away the picture of their house and ask the child to visualise the walk through their house and the items to be remembered in their mind's eye.

Reinforcement: Praise and encourage all attempts to focus and visualise in this activity.

Memory Magic Activity 6.4

Chaining

Object of the Activity: To introduce the child to the idea of creating a visual image or story that links the items to be remembered together.

Equipment: Random selection of pictures. Pen and paper.

How to Play: Place four or five pictures on a table in front of the child. Help the child to create visual images and stories that link the items together. You or the child could draw the images the child creates using simple iconic images if the child finds this helpful. For example, elephant, banana, hat, and a bin could be linked by picturing an elephant plucking a banana from a tree and squeezing it with his trunk so that the banana pops out of the skin. The elephant can catch the banana in his mouth and eat it. He then throws the skin into the air which lands on his head like a hat covering his eyes. This causes him to stumble and slip and fall in the bin. Remember, funny images are more memorable!

To Make It Easier: Help the child to link only two or three items at a time. Repeat Activity 4.5 Link Them if more practice is needed.

To Make It Harder: Tell the child the list to be remembered but do not show them the pictures or allow them to draw the images. They must then visualise everything in this activity.

Reinforcement: Praise and encourage the child to use visualisation and humour in this task.

Memory Magic Activity 6.5

Pegwords

Object of the Activity: To introduce the child to methods of remembering lists of numbers or long digits using peg mnemonics. This can be used to remember factual information, e.g. the speed of light which is 186,000 miles per second can be turned into 1 - bun, 8 - gate, 6 - sticks and visualised as a bun going through a gate made of sticks. Additionally this can be extended to include a reference to 'light' and the 'per second' by including two bolts of lightening (light) coming down with only the second one hitting the bun or gate (per second).

Equipment: Pen and paper. List of peg words below.

How to Play: Each digit from 0 to 10 has its own peg-word (see list). Use numbers the child may need to remember, such as their phone number, or dates in history. Help the child to work out the rhyming peg-word for each digit to be remembered and then help them to make up a visual image or story linking these rhyming words together. The child can describe this to you or draw it.

To Make It Easier: Use only three digits. Show the child how they can recall a phone number by making up a story or image using peg words.

To Make It Harder: Give the child the number to be remembered and see if they can turn it into an image or story without your support.

Reinforcement: Praise and encourage the child's attempts to turn the peg-words into a visual image or story.

Memory Magic Activity 6.6

Pegwords

0	Zero	Hero
1	One	Bun
2	Two	Shoe
3	Three	Tree
4	Four	Door
5	Five	Hive
6	Six	Sticks
7	Seven	Heaven
8	Eight	Gate
9	Nine	Wine
10	Ten	Hen

Memory Magic Activity 6.6

Which Mnemonic?

Object of the Activity: To help the child to decide which type of mnemonic would work best for them for different types of information to be remembered.

Equipment: Pen and paper.

How to Play: Give the child a difficult word to spell, a made up telephone number, a shopping list, and a list of vocabulary from a topic they are covering in school. Discuss each piece of information with the child and help them to think which of the mnemonics covered could be use to try and help them remember the information. Allow the child to choose which mnemonic they will use and encourage the child to make up their own mnemonic and then test them to see if they can recall the information.

To Make It Easier: Reduce the choice of mnemonics for each piece of information to just two.

To Make It Harder: Reduce the amount of help you give the child when choosing which mnemonic to use.

Reinforcement: Praise any attempt to use the mnemonics. If it doesn't work encourage the child to try a different one.

Memory Magic Activity 6.7