

## Games to work on auditory memory

The key thing for students to understand about improving memory is that it is all about learning to use strategies.

### Strategies

With all these games, talk about the strategies that can help and encourage the student to work out what is most useful to them. Insight into what helps you remember things can improve your memory - make sure that they use strategies!

- **Can you visualise each item?**  
Don't just rely on auditory skills, visualising helps.
- **Can you link items in categories?**  
Making associations helps memory.
- **Does repeating each item help?**  
Try saying them out loud several times.
- **Does putting them into a story help?**  
Making something meaningful helps.
- **Think of something funny about them.**  
Funny things are more memorable.

Try some of these games using one of the strategies above. Which strategy works best for which task? Do you have a preferred strategy?

Useful skills for older students include:

- Practise identifying key words from some information, written or oral, and practise repeating them.
- Practise making simple notes, with symbols, pictures and words to summarise information.

Start by getting the student to remember a small number of items, as many as they can easily manage. Encourage the use of a strategy that helps them. Then gradually try one more item.

### Games

**'I went to market and bought....'** Each person playing takes a turn to offer an idea at the end of the sentence. The list grows with every turn.

First player: 'I went to market and bought a banana'

Second player: 'I went to market and bought a banana and a pear'

You could introduce another rule for older students, for example the ideas must follow alphabetical order, or each new idea must start with the last sound of the word before.

**'I went to the zoo and saw.....'** As above, but use animals instead of fruit and vegetables.

**'When I went on holiday I packed.....'** As above but use clothes and other holiday essentials. There are many variations of this game.

**I spy.....** If the student is not sure about the sounds in words, you could give clues instead. For example 'I spy something tall and green'.

**Tell a story.....** Take turns to tell a story, each person adds sentence.

First player 'There was a ladder against the wall'

Second player 'A boy came along and climbed up the ladder'

You can play another version where each person adds a word to a sentence.

**Kim's game....** Gather some objects, about 20, and put them on a tray. Look at them for 2 minutes. Who can remember the most objects?

**Memory list.....** Gather some objects (or pictures) together and put them in a bag or box. Take turns to pull one out and say what it is, then put it out of sight in another box or bag. When all the objects (or pictures) are out, take turns to recall them. You can make it more difficult by trying to recall them in the order you saw them.

**Telephone numbers...** Use a toy/pretend telephone. The teacher is the telephone operator. The student asks for the telephone number of his/her friend. The teacher supplies the number (vary this according to student's ability). If student repeats it back correctly, he/she is put through to the friend.

**Sound effects.....** Use pictures or objects of things that make distinctive noises (vehicles, animals, bells, phones etc). Take turns to choose 2 or 3, and make the sound for each one. Can the other people remember them and repeat the sounds or tell you the corresponding items?

**Musical instruments.....** Use a variety of shakers, bells, drums etc. They can be home made or not. Put them out of sight, behind a screen. Take turns to go and play 2 or 3. Can the other people remember them and tell you which ones you played?

**Rhythms.....** Take turns to clap (or use a tambourine) to make a simple rhythm, and then ask the others to copy you.

**Actions.....** Take turns to give 2 or 3 or 4 instructions such as pat your head, turn around, clap your hands.

**Guess the object.....** collect a group of objects. Ask the student to look at them and then close his/her eyes while you describe one. The student then has to open his/her eyes and guess which one you were describing. To tax the memory, make sure the objects are all quite similar.

**Repetition...** Say a string of digits/sounds/nonsense words or syllables. Then get the student to repeat back what he/she heard you say.

**Shapes...** each student has a collection of shapes. You call out the names of different shapes, starting with 2, then 3 or even 4 (e.g. rectangle, triangle, circle). The student repeats the names of the shapes and then takes them from his/her selection and puts them in that order. Obviously, check the student knows shape names to start with!