

Unit 10 With a failing memory, you meet a lot of new people.

I. Lead-in

Key

1.T 2.T 3.T. 4.F 5.T 6.T 7.F 8.T 9.T 10.T

II. Basic listening practice

1. Script

W: OK. It's your turn to pay the bill. I paid last time.

M: What? You have a selective memory. You tried to pay last time, but your credit card failed. so I ended up paying! It's definitely your turn.

Q: What is true according to the dialog?

2. Script

M: I'm having real trouble reviewing for this French exam. I Just can't memorize the vocabulary.

W: I can't either. I hate having to learn things by heart. I guess we just have to keep reading the texts over and over.

Q: What does the woman prefer?

3. Script

W: Oh look! There's that guy we saw last week playing football in the park! He looked great in his kit. remember?

M: Him? I don't remember him. I've got a terrible memory for faces. I have a hard time even recognizing people I've been introduced to.

Q: What is the man's problem?

4. Script

M: Why is there a big sign on the back of your door that says "keys"?

W: It's to remind me to take my keys when I go out because I'm always locking myself out by accident! It doesn't help though. Now I just forget to read the sign.

Q: Why is there a sign on the back of the door?

5. Script

M: That history exam was really hard. The essay question was terrible!

W: I know. I wish I were David. He has photographic memory, you know. How useful that would be!

Q: What is true of David?

Key: C D A B C

III. Listening in

Task 1 Short-term memory

Script

M: Did you catch Prof. Brown's lecture on memory? I dodged it.

W: Yeah, It was very interesting. He said that we have short-term and long-term

memories.

M: So what? Without attending the lecture, I know that. First there's information you hear and retain for only a little while. The other kind sticks in your mind for a long time. Have I got it right?

W: Yes, you do. An interesting part of his lecture is the magic number seven.

A psychologist called Miller did experiments to show that the capacity of short-term memory was about seven items, or seven plus or minus two items.

M: I don't quite see what you mean.

W: Here's an example, After listening to a long string of digits, most adults can repeat about seven digits in the correct order. This suggests our short-term memory can keep about seven items.

M: I can dig it. More than seven digits, even a clever man like me starts to make mistakes.

W: Well, have you heard about the magic number four?

M: That's news to me.

W: Trying to remember seven digits makes you feel the strain. But you can usually memorize three or four digits painlessly.

M: I quite agree. When you try to recall a 10- digit telephone number, you can divide the digits into three groups: first, the area code, such as 215, then a three-digit chunk, and finally a four-digit chunk.

W: This method of remembering telephone numbers is far more effective than trying to remember a string of 10 digits. By the time Prof. Brown finished, we all believed our working memory couldn't comfortably handle more than four small numbers at a time. Are you convinced?

Questions and key

1. According to the psychologist Miller, how many items can our short-term memory store?

B) About seven items.

2. What is the man's response to the woman's explanation of the magic number seven?

C) He believes even a clever man may not be able to repeat more than seven digits in the correct order.

3. According to the woman, what is true of the magic numbers seven and four?

D) We can memorize three or four digits effortlessly.

4. What does the man want to show when he mentions a 10-digit telephone number?

C) We can divide 10 digits into smaller groups to facilitate memorizing.

5. What does the woman finally say about the working memory?

A) It cannot handle more than four small numbers at a time easily.

Task 2 Where did the professor go?

Script

This is a true story, which happened to friends of ours in a small town in South Africa. They were a hospitable couple who often entertained their neighbors with drinks or tea. One spring night, they invited a retired professor to supper. During the evening, it began

to pour with rain, and the heavens really opened. Because the professor had walked there, they offered to put him up for the night. They pointed out that by staying overnight, he did not need to go out in the bad weather. The professor agreed on the soundness of the idea, thanked his hosts profusely, and the matter seemed to be settled. But while the couple were washing the dishes after supper, the forgetful professor disappeared. No one could find him anywhere. Eventually, after about half an hour, the front doorbell rang. There was the professor, soaked to the skin. When he was asked what on earth he had been doing in the rain, he replied that because he was going to stay there overnight, he had gone home to get his pajamas and toothbrush.

Key

1.T 2.F 3.F 4.T 5.F

Task 3 How to improve your memory?

Script

Everyone can take steps to improve their memory, and with time and practice most people can gain the ability to memorize huge amounts of information. Here are some tips:

First, take mental exercise. Regularly "exercising the brain keeps it growing and promotes the development of new nerve connections that improve memory. By learning a new language or learning to play a musical instrument, you can keep your brain active. Second, take physical exercise. Regular aerobic exercise promotes blood circulation to the brain and helps it avoid the memory loss that comes with aging.

Third, eat well and eat right. Fresh fruits and vegetables such as broccoli, blueberries and spinach are the best sources of the vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants. Antioxidants protect and support brain functions. Also, you need to get enough protein, which is necessary to maintain healthy muscles, organs, and nerve cells. Eating five or six small meals throughout the day instead of three large meals also seems to improve mental functioning by limiting dips in blood sugar, which may affect the brain negatively.

Fourth, avoid chemical poisoning. Avoid eating foods that contain such additives as artificial sweeteners preservatives, and artificial colors. These chemicals can accumulate in the body and become toxic, causing brain damage, memory loss, and Alzheimer's disease. If you eat foods polluted with pesticides or insecticides instead of organically grown foods, the toxic chemicals can affect nerve functions and cause memory loss. Moreover, avoid alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs; they destroy brain cells at a rapid rate.

Fifth, sleep well. The amount of sleep we get affects the brain's ability to recall recently learned information. Getting a good night's sleep-- a minimum of seven hours a night can improve your memory.

Sixth, reduce stress. Chronic stress can make remembering much more difficult. Even temporary stress can make it difficult to focus on concepts or to observe things. So, you should try to relax. Regularly practice yoga or other calming exercises.

Key

(1) brain (2)nerve connections (3)musical instrument (4) your brain
(5)blood circulation (6)vegetables (7)Protect and support (8) healthy
(9)sugar (10)memory loss (11) nerve functions (12) tobacco (13)Improve
(14) remembering (15) temporary

IV. Speaking out

Model 1 It slipped my mind!

Script

Amy: I sent out the invitations to the dinner party.

Bill: That's good. Now what should we do?

Amy: We've got to plan the menu.

Bill: Oh, that's right (1)Do you have anything in mind?

Amy: I think I'm going to make the chicken salad we had at the Christmas party.

(2)Remember I asked the chef for the recipe?

Bill: Yeah, but (3)did you forget that Linda doesn't eat chicken?

Amy: Linda? Oh my gosh! I forgot to invite Linda!(4)It just slipped my mind. She'll be mad at me.

Bill: Well, (5)everyone forgets something sometimes. It's not too late yet. I'll make a phone call. Don't worry.

Amy: Thanks! You see, (6)I'm getting forgetful. I think I'm getting old.

Bill: Looks like you are, sweetheart.

Model 2 I can't think of it off the top of my head.

Script

John: Hey, Sue. (1)Do you know what Jack's home phone number is?

Susan: (2)I can't think of it off the top of my head. I don't have my address book on me, and I don't have my mobile phone with me either.

John: That's too bad! I've got to find him now. It's urgent! If I can't find him today, I'll be dead!

Susan: You might want to look it up in the phone book.

John: I've checked already, but it seems that his phone number is unlisted.

Susan: Maybe it's under his roommate's name.

John: Well, I guess so.

Susan: Well, (3)why don't you call Jane? She has his phone number.

John: I've tried, but no one answered!

Susan: Maybe call his office and ask his secretary?

John: I've already tried. She won't tell me. She says it's private.

Susan: Oh, that's right. (4)They usually don't release private information over the phone.

John: It's a pity. You usually (5)have a powerful memory. but you can't help today. What's wrong with you? Your memory seems to be fading early.

Susan: It's not that my memory is fading. (6)I do have a good memory for faces and names, but a poor one for numbers and dates.

Model 3 What's wrong with your memory?

Script

Bi: Hi, honey! My trip to London was wonderful.

Amy: Tell me what thrilled you most.

[*The telephone rings and Bill answers it. Then he hangs up.*]

Bill: Er (1)where was I?

Amy: (2)You were talking about your tour in London.

Bill: Oh yeah.

Amy: I bet you had a great time.

Bill: Yes, I particularly enjoyed visiting the Tower of London.

Amy: How did you get there? By bus or underground?

Bill: Let me see ... Sorry, (3)I can't remember any more.

Amy: (4)what's wrong with your memory?

Bill: I hope it's not Alzheimer's disease. (5)I don't want to forget my own name.

Amy: I don't think so. Perhaps (6)it's just temporary forgetfulness. You'll be all right after a good sleep.

Bill: I hope so. But as this is happening so often recently, I think I must go see a doctor and get some pills.

Amy: It's not as serious as that. Anyway, I wish you had a good memory for happy events, and a bad one for unhappy things.

V. Let's talk A memory test

Script and key

This is Bringing Science to the People, the impromptu lab set up in a bookshop in Piccadilly. The plan-to test the (1)memory power of our brains. A human guinea pig is required, and I was happy to oblige. Ten minutes go by, along with a couple of hundred pictures, and that it was time for the (2)test.

"So, if you look at these two, one of them you've seen before, and one is completely (3)new. Which one do you think you (4)saw before?"

"Uh, B?"

"OK. And these two?"

"Umm, ha ha. B again I think."

A few more questions later and it was time for the (5)verdict.

"So, not too bad at all. I see, around about 60 percent recall, which is interesting when you only saw the slides for a few (6)seconds there. And that's really what we're looking at here, just how amazing our visual (7)memories are."

This hasn't been tried since the 1970s, deemed too grueling for anyone to (8)endure. Not so for these two (9)volunteers; they'll spend the next three days (10)staring at the screen. So to put this into context, imagine a relative of yours goes on holiday, takes (11)10,000 pictures. When they come home, and they make you sit through a three-day (12)slide show. And then at the end of that, they force you to take a test.

The professor hopes to prove that we remember (13)70 percent of everything we see. Good news for advertisers who want to keep their products on our minds; not so good though if you (14)lose your keys. This type of recall will help you remember what they look like, but you'll still have no idea (15)where you put them.
Toby Sadler, London Today, Piccadilly.

VI. Further listening and speaking

Task 1 skills to remember things better

Script

Six skills are recommended here to help you remember things better.

1. Focus your attention. Often we forget things not because our memory is bad, but rather because we do not concentrate or pay attention. For instance, often we don't learn people's names at first because we aren't really concentrating on remembering them. If you make a conscious effort to remember such things, you'll do much better.
2. Create vivid, memorable images. You remember information more easily if you can visualize it. If you want to associate a child with a book, try not to visualize the child reading the book--that's too simple and forgettable. Instead, come up with something more dramatic, like the book chasing the child or the child eating the book.
3. Repeat things you need to learn. When you want to remember something, be it your new co-worker's name or your best friend's birthday, repeat it, either out loud or silently.
4. Record important tasks. Write down what you must do in a diary. If you don't have a pen, wear your watch on your right wrist or wear it upside down; this will help you remember the task. You can also leave yourself a telephone message reminding yourself of something important.
5. Group things you need to remember. Random lists such as a shopping list can be especially difficult to remember. To make them easier, try categorizing the individual items on the list. If you can put 10 things into three groups, you can remember them more easily.
6. Organize your life. Keep items that you frequently need, such as keys and eyeglasses, in the same place every time. Improved organization can help free up your powers of concentration so that you can remember routine things.

Key: A B D D C

Task2 Is your memory in good shape?

Script

M: Tell me your secret. You're suddenly getting excellent marks in every subject, and you used to be a bottom-of-the-class student just like me.

W: Simple enough. I read an article in a scientific journal that linked studying with remembering, based on a recent research into the brain.

M: Oh! That stuff is old hat: study at the same time every day, be sure your clothes are comfortable, make sure you have enough light, blah, blah, blah.

W: Not so fast, wise guy. I'm talking about principles like "Mental Visualization", creating a picture in your mind of what is to be remembered.

M: OK. That does sound different. Is “Association” a principle- you know, connect what you want to remember with something you're familiar with?

W: Right on! “Consolidation” is another. I review my notes right after class and consolidate, or absorb the new material into what I’ve already learned.

M: You're moving ahead fast with those principles. I swear this weekend I'm going to study 16 hours a day both Saturday and Sunday.

W: Whoa, big guy. That's not the way. Follow the principle of "Distributed Practice". Shorter study sessions distributed over several days are better.

M: That system is all very well for you; you've got a good memory. But what about me? I've got a memory like a sieve.

W: You're too modest. There's nothing wrong with your memory. But memory is like a muscle; it needs exercise. And don't forget it.

Key:

(1)excellent marks (2) principles (3) picture (4)Association (5) familiar with (6)Consolidation (7) already learned (8)16 (9) Distributed Practice (10) shorter (11) muscle (12) exercise

Task 3 How to remember names?

Script

You just called the TV repair shop, and the voice on the other end of the line told you, “This is Don Smith.” About five minutes later, you told your wife that “this guy” would be out to fix the TV in the morning. You couldn't think of his name although you knew he mentioned it on the phone.

This happens all the time to just about any of us unless we have learned to concentrate and implant a name in our memory, right at the time we hear it. To do this, you must make a habit of repeating the name back to the person. This action will remind you to store the name in your "memory bank" each time you hear someone's name, and within a short time the "repeating" process can be discontinued.

When you meet someone in person, use the same procedure, and in addition, visualize something different, unusual or ridiculous about the persons appearance, position, or actions that ties in with his or her name. Later, you may write the descriptive information on one side of a card and the name on the other side. Look at it repeatedly, see the "picture" in your mind's eye as you look at the name; or when you see the name, visualize the "picture" you have assigned to the name.

Getting this system to work will require changes in your thinking, and it may take several days or several weeks to become proficient.

Viewing and speaking A dolphin exhibition

Script and key

A recent art exhibition in Florida honored the animal often seen as man's most (1)intelligent friend.

The “Dolphins on Parade” exhibition in the Florida Keys featured life-sized decorated dolphin (2)paintings made of wood and other materials. The dolphins were (3)shown at area businesses and along the beach. Sponsors paid US\$750 to (4)cover the artists' fee

and the cost of materials.

There were more than 100 dolphin themes, (5)including a beer-belly dolphin. They showed the work of (6)local artists, as well as the beach (7)atmosphere the Keys are famous for.

Probably the most (8)unique was special because of its artist, Pandora. Pandora the dolphin (9)painter is a real dolphin, at the Dolphin Research Center, in Marathon, Florida. The playful artist streaks colors across a dolphin painting, holding a brush in its (10)mouth.

The exhibition was held by the Monroe Council of the Arts as part of a plan to make the Keys an international arts center. The paintings were to be auctioned off in March, with the money earned going to community art programs.