

DESIGNING A STUDY STRATEGY



Alright. You've learned all these fun ways to remember information, but let's put it together into a master plan!

Ask Your Instructor What to Expect

- The worst they can say is "You'll find out when you write the test"
- Most instructors are pretty good at telling you what to expect, however
- Whether it's... know Chapters 1-10
- Or there will be Multiple Choice and an essay question
- Some might even provide a review guide
- It is good to ask whether the test is cumulative (all material will be tested) or not cumulative (only the material from the last test to the present will be tested)
- Your time and energy are limited. There is no sense in doing more work than you need to

Study Checklists and Schedules

- Now that you know you need to study Chapters 1-10, make a master study list of all the information you need to know for a test
- And be specific
- Concepts, theories, readings, definitions, etc.
- Break it down, you don't want to miss anything!
- Once you have this, you can create a schedule that ensures you have time to study all the material
- Then, as you study each concept, definition, theory... you can cross it off your list

Create a Mind Map

- Mind maps are great tools for figuring out what you know and where you need to improve
- A mind map connects information to other information (which is wonderful because our brains naturally work that way)
- Start without looking at your notes
- Write down everything you know from memory about a specific point, and how it is connected to other information
- Then use your notes or textbook to fill in what you missed
- OR pick out keywords and write down everything you know about that word, then go back and fill in what you forgot
- You're also creating a retrieval clue by doing this

Study

- Everything you've been doing up till this point is studying
- Each step is building your understanding and memory of the material you need to know
- There are many different ways to study and review
- Look at the Memory Techniques and discover what works best for you
- Then use them!

Monitor Yourself

- This awareness should be with you throughout the entire process
- Be aware of what information you've learned and what you have yet to study
- Cross items off your study list as they are reviewed
- And ask yourself if you understand the material
- Be honest!
- Studying for tests and exams is stressful, and you might trick yourself into believing you understand something when you don't
- And how do you know IF you're learning the material?
- It is a good indication you understand something if you can relate it to information you already know or explain it using your own words
- Or, if you can think of an analogy

This concept is like _____ or relates to _____ which is also like _____

- If you can explain what you know to someone else. If you can teach it, you probably know it
- If you can come up with examples
- All these indicate you are learning the material deeply (long-term memory)

And after all this, you write the darn thing. BUT, having employed all these tips, you will hopefully walk into that test or exam feeling confident.

Cuseo, Joseph B, Aaron Thompson, Michele Campagna, Viki Sox Fecas. *Thriving in College and Beyond: Research-Based Strategies for Academic Success and Personal Development*. Dubuque: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, 2016.

Ellis, Dave. *Becoming a Master Student*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006.