

STUDENT GUIDE TO CREATING MEMORY AIDS

What Is a Memory Aid?

Memory aids are meant to level the playing field for students with documented deficits in memory, allowing them to recall information that would otherwise be inaccessible to them in a testing situation. The memory aid allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and mastery of the course material without taxing already compromised memory function. The content of a memory aid will be dependant on the format of the test/exam.

Like all accommodations, this accommodation cannot interfere with essential learning outcomes. Therefore, a memory aid may not be permitted where rote recall is an essential learning outcome.

Memory Aids ARE:

- reference tools that provide triggers that allow students to access information from memory
- not useful to students unless the student has solid knowledge of how to use the information it contains

Memory Aids ARE NOT:

- answer sheets
- substitutes for studying
- an exemption from knowing course material
- full courses notes
- open textbooks

How Do I Use This Accommodation?

The approval of a memory aid is a partnership between the student and the faculty. The ASC will also assist as needed.

The process for using a memory aid in a testing environment is as follows:

- The student will prepare the memory aid at least one week before the test or exam and present it to their faculty for review

- The student and faculty negotiate the content, however the student must delete any content that the faculty does not deem appropriate and found to provide an answer, rather than a trigger for an answer
- It is the responsibility of the faculty to ensure that by accessing this accommodation, the student will continue to meet the course requirements without compromising academic integrity
- Faculty must show approval for the content by signing off on the memory aid
- The faculty will photocopy the memory aid and attach the original to the test/exam provided to the test centre. The photocopied memory aid will be given to the student

Student Responsibilities

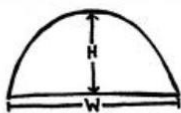
- Study and learn course content
- Decide on what cues/mnemonic devices are needed to assist with the recall of course material
- Develop the memory aid
- Make revisions as directed by your faculty

Strategies for Making a Memory Aid

- The format of memory aids may vary but typically it is one letter size page (8 ½ x 11”), 12-point font, either typed or handwritten, and may including drawings, diagrams, charts. Please confirm the dimensions with your faculty.
- The type of memory strategies used also varies from student to student but here are some examples below:

Formulas

Write down specific formulas for the test/exam. Students must know how to apply the formula. This is only acceptable when the goal of the test/exam is not memorization of a formula.



A diagram of a semi-circle. A horizontal line at the bottom represents the base, with a double-headed arrow below it labeled 'W'. A vertical line from the midpoint of the base to the top of the arc represents the height, with a double-headed arrow to its left labeled 'H'.

$W = \text{width of the base of the arc}$
 $H = \text{height measured at the midpoint of the base}$

$$\text{radius} = \frac{H}{2} + \frac{W^2}{8H}$$

Example: In this example students must know what “H & W” stand for to plug in the appropriate numbers in the formula to help solve the problem

Acronyms

A combination of letters where each letter is a cue to an idea that needs to be remembered. We use acronyms regularly in everyday life, for example NBA, NHL, LOL

- Take the first letter in word or phrase you are trying to remember and make a new word
- Each letter acts as cue to what you must remember

Examples:

BEDMAS is an acronym to remember the order of operations in math:

Brackets Exponents Division Multiplication Addition Subtraction

HOMES is an acronym to remember the Great Lakes:

Huron Ontario Michigan Erie Superior

Acrostics

A poem, rhyme, or sentence that is created where the first letter of each word is a cue to an idea to be remembered

Examples:

***N**ever **E**at **S**hredded **W**heat to remember directions:*

North/East/South/West

***M**y **V**ery **E**xcellent **M**om **J**ust **S**erved **U**s **N**oodles to recall the order of the planets:*

Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune.

***N**ever **l**et **m**onkeys **e**at **b**ananas to remember white blood cells:*

Neutrophils, Lymphocytes, Monocytes, Eosinophils, Basophils

Mnemonic Rhymes

Puts information in the form of a poem.

Examples:

'30 days hath September, April, June, and November. All the rest have 31 Except February one in four when it has one day more' to remember the number of days in each month:

'I before E, except after C' to help with spelling

Mind Maps

To create a mind map, you usually start in the middle of the page with the central theme/main idea and from that point you work outward in all directions to create a growing diagram made up of keywords, phrases, concepts, facts and figures. Use lines, arrows, speech bubbles, branches and different colours as ways of showing the connection between the central theme/main idea and your ideas which stem from it.

Examples:

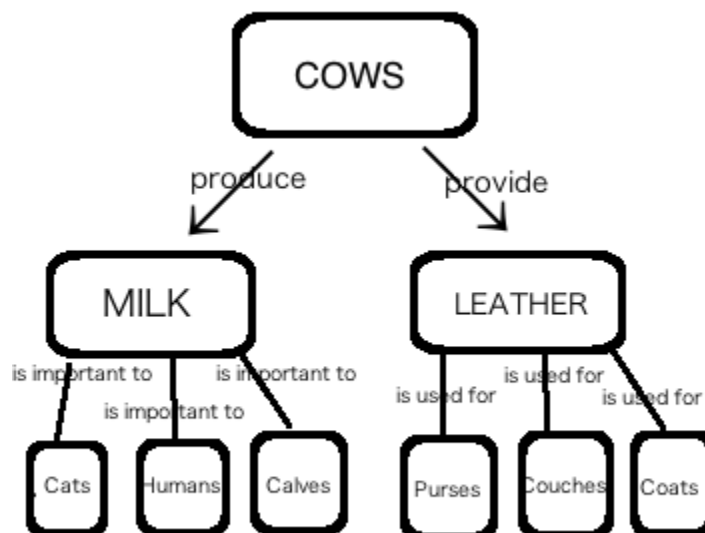


Image from <https://study.com/academy/lesson/concept-map-definition-examples.html>

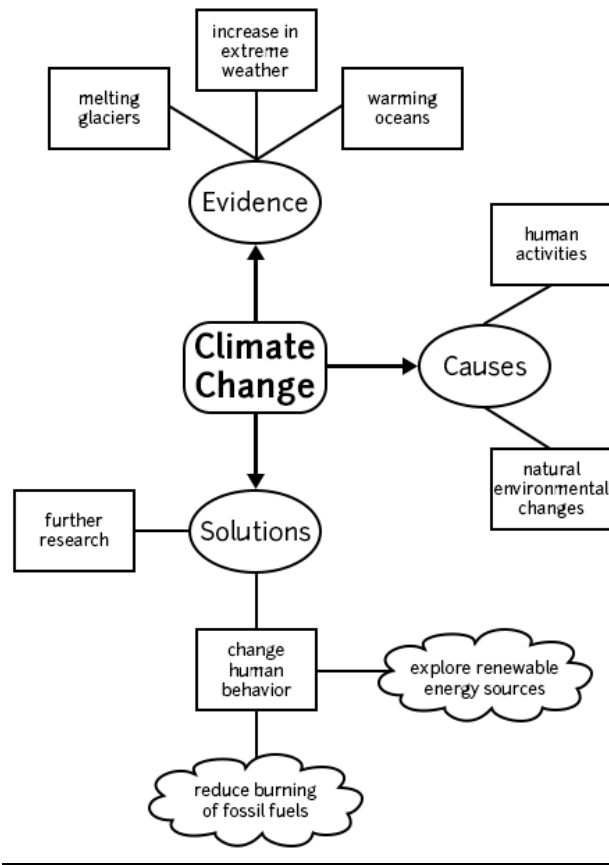


Image from <https://learningcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/using-concept-maps/>

Pictures/Images

This is where you use a particular shape or visual image to prompt your mind to remember the information within it. The image will only make sense to the creator.

Examples:



In this example a mind map depicting a snake, penguin, cow and frog is used to trigger memory of Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development - sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational and formal operational



In this example an image of a bat is used to represent depressive drugs:

Barbiturates,

Alcohol

Tranquilizers

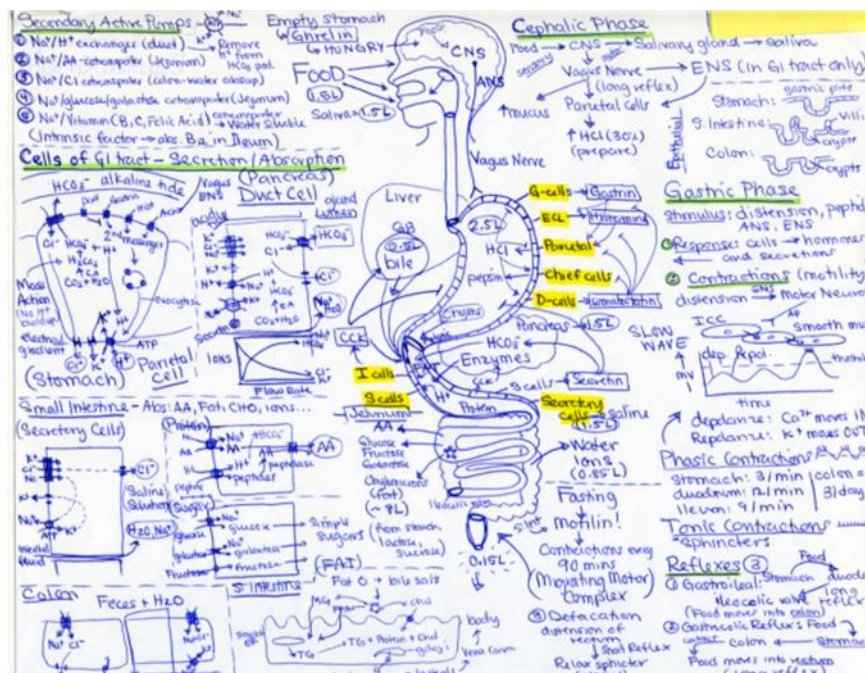


Image from <https://www.fanshawec.ca/student-success/student-success/student-services/accessibility/plan-success/faculty-guide-memory#:~:text=Memory%20aids%20provide%20help%20to%20students%20with%20documented,knowledge%20of%20course%20material%20by%20of%20facilitating%20memory%20function.>

In this example an image was created to remember the 50 states in the U.S.A.

Crib Sheet/Cheat Sheet

A crib sheet is a concise set of notes for quick reference. The crib sheet acts as a type of external memory and could contain a wide variety of information depending on the course.



Word Lists

Word lists rely on associations between easy to remember concepts which can be related back to the information that is to be remembered.

Example:

The word list below contains key terms to assist a student with writing an essay on learning disabilities

- *processing deficits*
- *cognitive ability*
- *academic achievement*
- *psycho-educational assessment*
- *accommodations*

Word Glossary

A word glossary is a list of terms with the definitions of those terms. This type of memory aid would only be appropriate if definitions and or spelling are not being tested.

Example:

GCSE SCIENCE KEYWORD GLOSSARY

Key word	Definition
Accuracy	A measurement result is considered accurate if it is judged to be close to the true value.
Calibration	Marking a scale on a measuring instrument. This involves establishing the relationship between indications of a measuring instrument and standard or reference quantity values, which must be applied.
Data	Information, either qualitative or quantitative, that has been collected.
Errors	See also uncertainties. The difference between a measured value and the true value.
<i>measurement error</i>	These are values in a set of results which are judged not to be part of the variation caused by random uncertainty.
<i>anomalies</i>	These cause readings to be spread about the true value, due to results varying in an unpredictable way from one measurement to the next.
<i>random error</i>	Random errors are present when any measurement is made, and cannot be corrected. The effect of random errors can be reduced by making more measurements and calculating a new mean.
<i>systematic error</i>	These cause readings to differ from the true value by a consistent amount each time a measurement is made. Sources of systematic error can include the environment, methods of observation or instruments used. Systematic errors cannot be dealt with by simple repeats. If a systematic error is suspected, the data collection should be repeated using a different technique or a different set of equipment, and the results compared.
<i>zero error</i>	Any indication that a measuring system gives a false reading when the true value of a measured quantity is zero, e.g. the needle on an ammeter failing to return to zero when no current flows. A zero error may result in a systematic uncertainty.
Evidence	Data which has been shown to be valid.
Fair test	A fair test is one in which only the independent variable has been allowed to affect the dependent variable.
Hypothesis	A proposal intended to explain certain facts or observations.
Precision	Precise measurements are ones in which there is

Really anything that helps a student recall/cue information from memory can be considered to put on a memory aid as long as it has been approved by your faculty.