

Wordplay and Language

How the Memory Works

Envision this. Three separate magnets lying idly on a surface. What would occur if these three magnets physically touched? They would simply bind together.

Our memories operate in a similar way, as they make connections and build upon one another. When you remember something, you do so by linking it with a familiar piece of information. For example, when you recall a phone number, you already have a template of one stored in your lovely brain. You're aware that each phone number consists of a three-digit area code, followed by 7 digits. You build upon this info to remember a brand new piece of information. What an amazing device the brain is!

Language and Memory

Language exercises a huge portion of our memory, building link after link. Toddlers and young children do this very well because their minds are geared toward learning massive amounts of information.

Reading, writing, and speaking are among the most important facets of your child's development. Without literacy, it is impossible to lead a normal, functional life. In order to get ahead and induce better retention, however, you can use special tricks that are conducive to language use.

Rhyming

How often does a catchy chorus ruminates in your mind without any seeming effort at all? Rhyming is a powerful device, and the sound of a rhyme itself can facilitate your memory.

Why does rhyming work so well? Remarkably, children learn nursery rhymes and preschool songs with such ease. Even as adults, we recall rhyming song lyrics without an immense conscious effort.

This simple technique of providing information in rhyming format gives your child leverage in the language learning process. Rhyming appeases the challenges of reading and speaking by transforming words into rhythmic tunes that activate the creative mind.

Alliteration

Like rhyming, alliteration is another device that makes reading and speaking easier for young children. Alliteration refers to a group of words with similar sounds or letters.

Consider an extensive grocery list comprising oranges, milk, apples, ham, ice cream, and beef. Recalling these items individually may prove to be an exacting task for the average mind. Yet, categorizing them into groups would aid the process of remembering each item. This is not an example of alliteration. It simply conveys that we are more likely to remember items in groups, such as alliterative sequences.

Wordplay Leads to Word Proficiency

Wordplay of any sort can lead to a better grasp of language for your young child. Word games are an enjoyable and effective approach to solidifying the concepts of reading, writing, and speaking. Consider conducting the following basic exercises:

1. Allow your child to create his/her own sequence of alliterative words. For example, using the letter "C," one may produce the word sequence, "creatively, crafty cats."
2. Ask your child to formulate rhyming sentences. This reinforces the creative faculties, and an ability to manipulate language.
3. "Fill in the blank" exercises can develop a greater understanding of context. Simply write a sentence with a missing word, and request that your child fill in the blank with the appropriate word.

As a parent, you have the capability to cultivate your child's early language skills through simple wordplay exercises and daily practice. Just a small amount of time each day will facilitate a solid foundation for your child's proficient and fluent reading and writing. Of course, read with your child every day, and make a conscious effort to engage in rich language development through lots of just plain and intentional conversation. Have fun!

Resources

Alphabet Anatomy's Meet the Capital Letters is replete with alliteration, and utilizes amusing rhyming verses and captivating illustrations to teach each letter's sound, shape, and how to write it.

<http://alphabetanatomy.com/>

Rock with the letters on You Tube. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hxxZsC-70jg>