

# Teaching and Human Memory

[From Teaching and Learning Conversation Series – 19 October and 16 November 2012]

Eric Kristensen, Educational Developer

[ericwkris@gmail.com](mailto:ericwkris@gmail.com)

## Resources for Exploration and Discussion

*Please take a moment to read one of the first two articles before we meet. The third article is brief and offers a lot to think about. They will enliven and inform our discussions together.*

Oct. 19 - What is new in our knowledge of human memory and why is it important (Part 1)?

<http://chronicle.com/article/TeachingHuman-Memory/129778/>

Nov. 16 - What is new in our knowledge of human memory and why is it important (Part 2)?

<http://chronicle.com/article/TeachingHuman-Memory/130078/>

Resource Article: Miller, Michelle D. (2011). "What College Teachers Should Know About Memory: A Perspective from Cognitive Psychology." *College Teaching*, 59(3), 117-122.

Bibliography of books and articles recommended by Michelle Miller with concise descriptions of each resource.

<http://www.jamesmlang.com/2011/12/welcome-chronicle-readers.html>

*Questions to consider....*

What surprised you about the research on human memory as described in these articles?

What learning and memory "truisms" do you feel have now been debunked?

What is one thing you could apply in your courses or in your studies?

*If you have trouble connecting to the Chronicle.com resources, go to*

<http://cufts2.lib.sfu.ca/CJDB/BVAC/journal/150050>

You may need to enter a password to gain access to these articles; call 604-984-1769 and speak to a librarian.

Exercise: Design teaching and/or study strategies that incorporate what we know from the cognitive science research on memory. Use the following list of findings to help you.

- Attention and focus are critical. Little is retained if your focus is interrupted.
- Cues are critical for the recall of information from long term memory. Particularly relevant cues include vividness (sensory impact, including visual and emotional), relevance to personal history, personal participation, context and structure.
- Frequent testing over time (testing effect).
- Learning assessments (exams, final projects) should reflect student course activities (assignments, quizzes, etc.)

Share your strategies in your group.

Decide which ideas seem most compelling, useful, practical or fun. Develop a 3 minute role play, drawing, metaphor or brief activity to share with the whole group.

Each group makes their presentation.