

Memory techniques

Some methods for remembering information date back centuries and are still useful today. In fact, you may have used some of them yourself!

The following are four of the most common memory techniques.

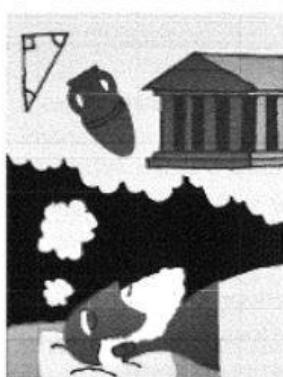
A THE METHOD OF LOCI



This technique for improving your memory was originally used in ancient Rome and Greece. With this method, you use familiar locations, like your own home, in order to remember a list of items, such as a things-to-do list. If 'buy milk' was the first thing on your list, you might imagine coming home from work and seeing some milk

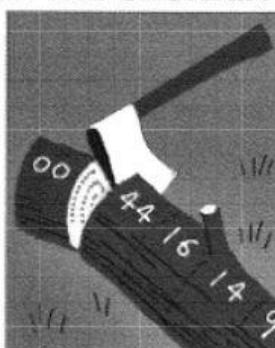
bottles outside the front door. If the second thing is 'post birthday card', you then picture the letterbox on the door as you walk into the house with your milk bottles.

C THE PYTHAGORAS METHOD



Pythagoras is best known as a mathematician, but it seems he was also busy developing a technique to improve memory. Apparently, every night he recalled what happened during that day to help him remember these events in as much detail as possible. After a while, he could recall more than one day at once, which helped him retain these events for months or even years. This method is just as applicable today, as your teachers know well. That's why they keep telling you to study for exams weeks in advance.

B THE CHUNKING TECHNIQUE



This method is most often used for memorizing long sets of numbers or for the spelling of complicated words. With the chunking technique, you can break down a huge amount of information into smaller parts, or chunks. Apparently, it is then easier to recall this information when you need it. For example, if someone tells you that their phone number is 0044 1614960998, and you don't have a pen and paper to note it down, you can memorize it in chunks like this: 00 – 44 – 16 – 14 – 96 – 09 – 98.

D USING MNEMONICS



People use mnemonics for all kinds of things, but they are particularly useful for memorizing your PIN. We are constantly told that we must not write our PIN down on a piece of paper, so how are you supposed to remember it? One of the easiest ways is to associate the numbers with the letters of the alphabet, so that 1 = A, 2 = B, and so on. You can then use the letters – in order – to make a four-word sentence in which each word begins with each of the letters. For example, the letters representing the PIN 3825 would be CHBE, so your sentence could be 'Cats Have Big Eyes'.

c Match the highlighted words and phrases in the text to the definitions below.

- 1 well known to you _____
- 2 separate something into different parts _____
- 3 relevant _____
- 4 very old, belonging to a distant period of history _____
- 5 imagine something visually _____
- 6 words, sentences, poems, etc. that help you to remember something _____
- 7 keep in your memory _____
- 8 before a particular time _____
- 9 make a connection between things in your mind _____