

Improve Memory Tips for Interviews

December 3, 2008

IMPROVING MEMORY

We all worry about failing memories and rely upon organization and mnemonic tricks to help us stay on top of everything. However, your learning disabled child will struggle even more. I'm sure there are times when you must think they are purposely ignoring you or they got distracted. In truth, it might be their memory that got in the way.

LD and ADHD students often have a weak working memory. This memory is different from the immediate short term memory. Working memory is the ability to hold something in one's conscious thought and manipulate and use it at the same time. Students who have slow processing speed and written language difficulties also struggle with working memory. Working memory allows students to follow directions, to remember a question while raising their hand to answer it, and hold on to the new information they need to apply to the work. In reading, working memory aids our comprehension, making it possible to organize and summarize the text and connect it to what we already know. In writing, it lets us juggle the thoughts we want to get on paper while keeping the big picture in mind.

Memory Tricks

⇒ Make certain they have a quiet study space that is theirs. The material they need to learn must be the most interesting thing around.

⇒ Aim for comprehension before memorization.

⇒ Learn using as many senses as possible. We retain:

20% of what we read
 30% of what we hear,
 40% of what we see,
 50% of what we say,
 60% of what we do
 90% if we involve 3 or more senses

⇒ Mnemonic devices such as :

- ↳ Visualization
- ↳ Mind Maps and chunking information into meaningful categories
- ↳ Rhyming Sentences (every good boy deserves fun)
- ↳ Acronyms (HOMES for the Great Lakes)
- ↳ Rhymes and alliteration (30 days hath September...)
- ↳ Jokes

⇒ Don't study for longer than 1 hour at a time – take **SHORT BUT REGULAR BREAKS**. Studies have proven that we remember more of what is studied at the beginning and end of a session so have as many beginnings and endings as possible

⇒ Start to prepare early as the brain needs time to consolidate the information. Cramming works for very few.

INTERVIEW TIPS

Always be positive! Remember you are both working towards the same goals.

The interviews are scheduled for 10 to 15 minutes only and the teachers are overwhelmed. If you want quality time with the teacher book the time before or after the interview schedule.

Before the Interview:

1. Determine what you want the teacher to do for your child (read previous reports & assessments)
2. Think about any questions that you have for the teacher and write them down so that you remember what you want to ask during the conference.

During the Interview

1. Be clear and refer to your list of questions
2. Be positive but don't hesitate to take notes
3. **Highlight your child's strengths (we all have weaknesses but we build from our strengths)**
4. Keep focused on what you want answered or provided for your child, not on how to do it. (the doing is the professional's job)
5. If you don't agree, speak up positively and politely and voice your concerns.
6. If you find that your child is struggling in any area, schedule a follow-up conference for the next week. By setting up an additional conference, you will have adequate time to develop a plan to help your child succeed. The interviews are scheduled for 10 to 15 minutes only and the teachers are overwhelmed. A point to realize is that the teachers wrote the reports at least 3 weeks ago **The marks on the report will be six to eight weeks old by the time you talk to the teacher!!!!**
7. If the conversation veers off in a direction that is not about your child, refocus the conversation

After the Interview

1. Keep in regular contact with the teacher
2. Discuss with your child what was said in the interview

FOR YOUR

INFORMATION

1. All tutoring/coaching sessions will **end as of Friday, Dec. 19, 2008** for Christmas and **re-sume again on Monday, January 5, 2009.**

2. This year, I have decided to follow Oprah's example and **scale down the Christmas exchange**. Instead of a book, I have purchased 2 sets of classroom supplies and 2 sets of school lunches for 50 children. These **gifts will be purchased through World Vision and made in honor of your children**. Words of gratitude in a Christmas card would be a very appreciated token, if your child wishes to exchange seasonal traditions.

3. A reminder that there will be no newsletter again until the end of January. I will be updating my recommended list of books and web sites