

Top tips for Enhancing Working Memory

- Ensure that verbally presented information is reduced in volume, repeated and rephrased using simpler language
- Staff should speak at a slower rate when giving explanations or instructions
- Break down instructions into manageable steps
- Instructions should be kept to a minimum and be clearly phrased
- Give instructions using both visual and verbal approaches
- Teach pupils to 'over-learn' information (Several error free repetition of information is often needed)
- Chunking (e.g. 10 digits could be chunked into a string of 5 two digit numbers)
- Give teacher-prepared handouts prior to learning (Post it notes, I pads, whiteboards etc to jot down information)
- Teach pupils to be active learners (underline, highlight, jot down keywords)
- Provide retrieval practice for pupils (a test, recalling information)
- Help pupils to develop cues when storing information (mnemonics, acronyms, tapping out sound structure)
- Back up instructions visually - written / visual reminders displayed on class board or own memo card
- Review material before going to sleep - research has shown that information studied this way is better remembered
- Talking to partners i.e. verbalising or retelling information can help support the recall and consolidation
- Regularly play memory games to develop pupils working memory, e.g. Kim's Game, I went shopping
- Allow pupils time for to think and plan their work
- To help pupils to engage in lessons where possible give them a question in advance so that they have time to think about and prepare their response
- To aid pupil's communication and memory skills ask them to retell events, or give a summary of their day. This will also help their word retrieval (remembering the best word to describe things) and sequencing (ordering events)

