

**MNEMONICS** (Memory-Aiding Devices) are simple 'methods' to help you to recall something that you find difficult to remember.



To help you start thinking mnemonically look at the following examples:

**Maths:** To remember the values of Pi 3.1415827..

"How I wish I could remember it rapidly." (The number of letters in the words gives the value of pi.)

**Geography:** To remember the six counties of Northern Ireland

"fat dad" (Fermanagh Armagh Tyrone Down Antrim Derry)

**Astronomy:** To remember the order of the planets from the sun:

"Mary Very Easily Makes Jam Saturday Unless No Plums." (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto)

**Biology:** To remember the classification of living things

"Kings Play Cards On Fairly Good Soft Velvet." (Kingdom, Phylum, Class, Order, Family, Genus, Species, Variety)

**Blood:** For the functions of blood: "Old Charlie Foster Hates Women Having Dull Clothes."

(Oxygen (transport), Carbon Dioxide (transport), Food, Heat, Waste, Hormones, Disease, Clotting)

**Excretion:** For the excretory organs of the body:

"SKILL" (Skin, Kidneys, Intestines, Liver, Lungs).

**Colours of the Spectrum:** To remember the order of the colours of the spectrum:

"Roy G. Biv" (Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet)

**Economics:** To remember that a "tight labour market" means there are many jobs available:

"Tell your boss to fly a kite, When the labour market is tight."

## TIPS FOR INCREASING READING SPEED

As our eyes move across the page they make a series of jerky movements. Whenever they come to rest on a word that is called a fixation. Most people fixate once on each word across a line of print. To make our speed increase we must take in more words with each fixation, rather than make our eyes move faster.

1. Try to avoid focusing on every word, but rather look at groups of 2 to 3 words. For instance, this sentence could be grouped in this manner: "for instance / this sentence / could be grouped / in this manner."
2. Work on vocabulary improvement. Familiarise yourself with new words so you don't get stuck on them when you read them again.
3. If you find yourself moving your lips when reading, force yourself to read faster by following (1.) above so that you can no longer move your lips.
4. Read more! 15 minutes a day of reading equals 18 books a year at an average reading speed!
5. Determine your purpose before reading. If you only need main ideas, then allow yourself to skim the material. Don't feel you must read every word.
6. Spend a few minutes a day reading at a faster than comfortable rate (about 2 to 3 times faster than your normal speed). Use your hand or an index card to guide your eyes down the page. Then time yourself reading a few pages at your normal speed. You'll find that often your normal reading speed will increase after your skimming practice.
7. Start slow! Practice reading for only 5 – 10 minutes at a time and gradually increase this time.
8. There are several books on increasing reading speed available online.

