

# TWU Counseling Center

## Mnemonic Devices

If you have a list of things that must be remembered in order, it is convenient to use a set of peg words. These are words or pictures that you can remember easily. You would then associate the new material with them. It's useful for the peg words to be as easy as possible to memorize, and because you're concerned with memorizing them in order, it's easier if you can relate them to the numbers 1 through 10. Here is a handy set of peg words.

1. Candle. A candle looks like the number 1.
2. Swan. A swan looks like the number 2.
3. Fork. A three-pointed fork looks like the number 3.
4. Dice. Here is the surface of a die with four spots showing.
5. Hand. Of course a hand has five fingers.
6. Pipe. A pipe with a bit of smoke looks something like the number 6.
7. Gallows. A gallows is usually shaped like the number 7.
8. Race track. A race track with a double loop looks like the figure 8.
9. The number 9 can look like a fishing reel with a hook at the end.
10. Ten. You can think of Indians; Ten little Indians.

To remember material, you would set up a secondary association between the candle and the first item in the list you wanted to remember, a swan for the second item, a trident for the third, and so on. The more unique and more novel the associations, the more effective they will be.

Let's take a look at ten words that might have appeared on your pretest and the way you'd use the peg words to remember them in order. Using secondary associations in the peg words, you might remember words like kitten, actor, closet, gas, balloons, lawn, skull, zoo, corn, and scissors in this way:

	PEG	WORD	
1.	candle	kitten	Kitten playing with a lighted candle
2.	swan	actor	Actor in a swan boat for an opera
3.	trident	closet	Fork sticking in a closet door.
4.	die	gas	Die looking like a four-element, gas-cooking stove.
5.	hand	balloons	Hand holding five balloons
6.	pipe	lawn	A man cutting his lawn smoking a pipe
7.	gallows	skull	A skull hanging on the gallows
8.	race track	zoo	Some zoo animals running around a race track
9.	reel	corn	Some corn as bait on the hook of the fishing reel
10.	Indians	scissors	Indians using scissors to cut deerskin moccasins

Remember, the more unique the associations, the easier they will be to remember later on. Just for fun, why don't you try taking another ten words from the Memory Test List and try associating?

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**TWU**  
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