Where Memories Go

Trace how attention, organization, and cues shape memory.

PS.3.3 "Describe the process, organization, and factors that influence encoding, storing, retrieving and forgetting memories."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline details about encoding, circle details about storing information, and number details about retrieving or forgetting it. Use your marks to trace what happens to the rowboat story.

The Rowboat Detail

1. On Tuesday, Maya visits a local history exhibit before a quiz on the town's flood decades ago. A guide describes how neighbors used rowboats to deliver food. Maya pictures a boat moving down her own street and links the story to a flood map she studied in class. This focused attention and connection to prior knowledge help her encode the new information. Her friend Leo checks his phone during the guide's talk and misses the rowboat detail. Both students were present, but they did not form equally strong memories of the event.

2. That evening, Maya explains the rowboat story to her brother and sorts her notes into groups: causes of the flood, ways people helped, and changes the town made afterward. Rehearsing the story and organizing related facts make it easier to retain. Memory is not stored as a single recording in one spot: the hippocampus helps form new long-term memories, while connected brain networks support their later storage. After sleeping, Maya can still recall the story. Sleep supports consolidation, the process that stabilizes newly formed memories. Her organized notes also give her several paths back to the rowboat detail.

3. On quiz day, a question about community aid reminds Maya of her notes on ways people helped. That cue helps her retrieve the rowboat story. Leo recognizes the guide's name but cannot recall how food was delivered; weak initial encoding may explain his gap. Maya briefly confuses the rowboats with trucks she read about in another flood account. Similar memories can interfere with retrieval, and recall can be inaccurate. When she rereads her notes, the rowboat detail returns. Forgetting does not always mean a memory has vanished; sometimes a useful cue makes stored information easier to retrieve.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Why was Maya more likely than Leo to encode the rowboat detail during the guide's talk?

2. How could Maya's grouped notes and her explanation to her brother help her keep and later find the rowboat detail?

3. Trace how the quiz question helped Maya retrieve the rowboat story.

4. Leo and Maya both have trouble recalling the rowboat detail. How do the likely causes differ?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine your class learns three new rules for a school recycling drive. In four or five sentences, describe how you would encode and organize the rules, strengthen their storage, use a cue to retrieve them, and address one possible cause of forgetting.

Where Memories Go

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline details about encoding, circle details about storing information, and number details about retrieving or forgetting it. Use your marks to trace what happens to the rowboat story. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Why was Maya more likely than Leo to encode the rowboat detail during the guide's talk?	**Maya paid attention, pictured the story, and connected it to something she had studied. Leo checked his phone and missed the detail.**
2	How could Maya's grouped notes and her explanation to her brother help her keep and later find the rowboat detail?	**Explaining the story rehearsed it, which could help her retain it. Grouping related facts gave her a path back to the detail.**
3	Trace how the quiz question helped Maya retrieve the rowboat story.	**The question about community aid cued her notes on ways people helped, which led her to the rowboat story.**
4	Leo and Maya both have trouble recalling the rowboat detail. How do the likely causes differ?	**Leo may not have encoded the detail strongly because he was distracted. Maya's similar memory of trucks interfered with her recall, but rereading her notes brought the rowboat detail back.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would read the three rules closely and connect each one to a bin I have used before. I would group the rules by the type of item they cover. I would explain them to a classmate and review them the next day to help me retain them. A label on a bin could cue me to retrieve the matching rule. If similar rules for different bins confused me, I would check the posted rules rather than guess.

Accept other passage-supported explanations of attention, rehearsal, organization, retrieval cues, and interference. For Part 3, look for a plausible plan that addresses all four stages or influences named in the prompt.