|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | |
| I | A System at Fault  In our school system, there are several basic tests student every will invariably encounter. Some of these may be  writing an in-class essay, taking a semester exam, or having quizzes on daily or weekly class material. All of these  involve an important brain function--memory recall. However, all students have encountered several if not many  opportunities where "memory failed," as the complaint goes. An entire grade may hang in the balance because the  student couldn�t recall what he or she has learned.  Unfortunately in today�s system, memorization techniques are never effectively taught in school. Students are  often told to memorize this speech or that piece of information, but many struggle with these tasks. Repetition is often  used to try to retain information, but for many this is considered time consuming, exceedingly dull, and tedious. While  this technique is an effective way to learn, it may not necessarily be the best technique for the high school student.  One important way that memory works is that strong emotional experiences are more easily recalled. The reason  for this is that emotion provides the mind with a structure to store the information. In short, the human mind loves  novelty (Minninger 138) and therefore it is well stored. This is because an emotional connection is made with the  person, and this connection can cross the realm of short-term working memory into long-term memory. No matter  what the emotion, it will be remembered (Minninger 138). If strong emotional associations: joy, sorrow, anger, fear, or  disgust, are tagged with the experience, then it will be incredibly well preserved (Rupp 44).  Scientific research has determined that memory has several properties. These are the Law of Recency, the Law of  Vividness, and the Law of Frequency. Techniques are used today that flex these properties, but there are few that can  unlock all of their potential at once. If these three were to be combined for one specific technique, the results would be  astounding. If teachers could inform their students of ways to commit what they learn to memory through means other  than repetition, it would mean so much to our society. The main problem, however, is that many of these teachers  know of no other techniques as well. It is through our effort in this experiment that we hope to spurn new and original  study techniques to assist not only the already accomplished student, but to offer the struggling and lagging student a  new and enjoyable way to learn.  Humor: The New Course of Action  Through our research and our own high school experience, my partner and I have found that such humorous  experiences truly are much more easily recalled than others. This fact could open the door to new study techniques that  not only achieve the same end result as other methods, but make studying more enjoyable.  For most students, poor study habits are the major cause of poor grades. A poor study ethic can undo most any  student, no matter how smart the student may be. Humor would make the study session enjoyable and allow for a  great deal of learning.  The teaching world could benefit from humor, also. This is not to suggest that every teacher ought to be a  comedian, but presentation can truly make all the difference for a student. Some of the best teachers my partner and I  have ever had not only taught us to change our perception on many subjects to become more learned on a subject, but  also brought the air of humor to everything they presented. This heightened our interest in the subject, and kept us  wanting more from the teacher. We consider ourselves quite fortunate that we have had the joy of being taught by  such skilled and knowledgeable teachers. But for those that have yet to experience the same thrill, it is up to them to  spark interest in their studies. Humor may just be the method that accomplishes that task. In our study, we attempted  to see if such a method may work. If memory is stimulated by humor, this may be a new way for us all to learn and  laugh to further our own knowledge. | |
|  |  | |