The Memory Project: An information sheet for teachers.

This information sheet is addressed to teachers to provide some information about the Memory Project, being run by Goldsmiths, University of London. We are looking for students aged 16 years or over who can spare 30 minutes to help with an exciting international study investigating how memory performance changes across our lifespan!

Why should you ask your students to participate?

This study is an opportunity for students to participate in real-world psychology research. They get to experience how practical research works, while at the same time contributing to an important project.

This study has full ethical approval, and anyone aged 16 or older can participate without requiring parental approval.

What is this study about?

We all have 1000's of thoughts every day and encounter billions of pieces of information over the course of our lifetime. Some people are better than others at remembering these thoughts and information. There is even a rare percentage of the world's population who have Highly Superior Autobiographical Memory (HSAM) and can accurately recall almost everything they have experienced in their lifetime!

It is well known that our memory performance varies with age, and can start to deteriorate as we get older. But at what age does our memory performance peak? And is deterioration with age really normal, and if so when does this start?

To help us better understand how memory varies across our lifespan our team at Goldsmiths, University of London has developed a simple online test to measure memory performance, so that anyone can take part.

How you can help

We need as many people as possible aged 16 or over to take part.

Importantly, we are looking for ALL levels of memory, so don't worry whether anyone's memory is one of the better ones, worse ones, or just 'average' - we are interested in everybody 😃

As well as asking your students to take part, you can also help by sharing details of this study with other teachers or anyone else aged 16 or over range who you think might be interested in taking part – the more people that participate, the more useful our results will be.

If you know anyone in the wider population aged *over* 18 who might want to participate please direct them to our separate website for older participants at www.forgettingtest.org.

You can also visit https://sites.gold.ac.uk/artlab to learn about our wider research program, or contact the lead researchers if you have any questions.

Study details and FAQs

How do students take part?

To take part students just need a device with a web browser and an internet connection. It can be done on a smartphone, PC, or tablet. To participate just browse to www.forgettingtest.org/ukschools and follow the instructions. The entire process takes place online.

We also have a flyer which can be provided to students, at: <new-url-to-be-created>

Will the test be easy?

To help us profile memory and assess different levels of performance the test needs to be challenging. So, students should not worry if they find it tricky since it is not an 'easy memory game' like you might find on some online sites. If anyone does find it hard, that does not mean they have a bad memory since we already know people with normal healthy memory can find it challenging.

How much time is needed to do the study?

The test is divided into three parts. The time to complete Part 1 will vary between people. Some people will only take about **10 minutes** to complete this part while some will take longer; however, the maximum time that this first phase will take is **25 minutes**. The other two parts take only **3 minutes each** - you just need to do them at a later stage, around **one hour** and **24 hours after** the first part.

When should I start?

Students should start when they know that they are free for up to 25 minutes for Part 1, and will be able to come back online one hour later for Part 2 and then finally a day later for Part 3. To help us profile how age impacts how memory changes over the first 24 hours it is really important that participants complete all three parts.

What do students have to do?

Students' task is to memorise pairs of unrelated words (e.g., book - tree) and then their memory for those pairs will be tested.

During testing, they be will be shown the first word in a pair (e.g., book) and asked to enter the second word (e.g., tree).

To familiarise them with the process there is a short demonstration using a very short list. Students can repeat the demonstration as many times as they like before starting the main part of the study.

After they have learnt all the pairs in the first part of the study they will need to return for a short test (approx. 3 mins) after 1 hour and again after 24 hours; the website will tell them what time they need to return.

Can I run the study during a class?

It should be possible to run the study within a classroom setting, as long students have access to a quite environment and their own device (smartphone, iPad etc), and as long as their timetable allows them to complete all 3 stages. The need to return to the website after one hour and again 24 hours later means it may be easier for students to take part during the last class of the day, or in their own time after school.

Are the timings for parts 2 and 3 critical; what happens if someone return a bit early or late?

The timings for the 1 hour and 24 hour tests are not critical. It is OK to be a bit early or late. Even if someone if very late they should still complete the study as their data is still important to us.

Does this study have ethical approval?

This study has full ethical approval, having been reviewed by the Goldsmiths, University of London ethical committee, and anyone aged 16 or older can participate without requiring parental approval.

Can I try the test myself to see what it is like?

Yes. Teachers can take part themselves so they can experience the test before asking students to do it. As long as you provide your age when asked we can tell you apart from the students, so your scores won't get mixed up with the younger group. Your

own data will also be very useful for our wider project looking across the whole lifespan.