

REVIEW

There seems to be a pattern of students entering middle school and high school with deficiencies in basic skills. To assist in this area, two daily reviews should be employed. These reviews should be brief – as little as 30 to 90 seconds. The review at the beginning of the class should cover recently learned material and may be used as an introduction to the lesson. This review helps place material into short-term memory. The review at the end of the period should address basic skills, important formulas, facts, algorithms, definitions, strategies, and deficiencies. This review is designed to place into long-term memory those items that all students should know at the completion of the school year. These reviews are important because they require students to revisit information from memory or notes.

While there is more to learning than just memorization, memorization is an important component of learning. Knowing “how” we remember is important if we are going to help students. Teachers should teach their students to review using different strategies such as mnemonics, linking, developing relationships, learning in context, and utilizing audio and visual cues.

Teachers can encourage students to develop memory skills by teaching highly structured and carefully sequenced lessons using frequent reinforcement and review. These memory skills are required for all kinds of cognitive activity, including the comprehension of analogies, the understanding of metaphors, and engaging in problem solving. Teaching students to recognize that they already use memory skills and transferring these existing skills to school will aid them in their efforts to learn.

If more instructional time were spent focused on cognitive strategies for learning and memorizing students would be helped to learn and remember. An important part of a teacher’s work should be devoted to teaching the strategies that facilitate learning.