Learning methods
Time management methods

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"The person who says he knows what he thinks but cannot express it usually does not know what he thinks"

---Mortimer Adler

Step 1: Select a concept to learn.

- What topic are you curious about?

- Take out a blank sheet of paper. Write out everything you already know about the subject you want to understand deeper. As you learn more about the topic, add it to your sheet. If you use a different color pen as you learn new things, you can literally watch your knowledge grow.

- Once you think you understand the topic well enough, move on to step 2.

Step 2: Teach it to a child

- Can you explain your chosen concept to a 12-year-old? Test your understanding by simplifying your notes.

- Banish jargon and complexity, using only words a child would comprehend.

- Simplicity reveals a depth of understanding, while jargon often conceals ignorance.

  Anyone can make a subject complicated but only someone who understands can make it simple.

Step 3: Review and Refine

- Write down your simplified explanation. The act of [writing aids reflection](#) and learning.

- In fact, reflection is the most important part of the learning process. Reflection is how we learn what we know and what we need to learn.

- Ensure your notes are free of any jargon or something that sounds confusing.

- Ensure your notes are free from jargon or any glossed-over complexities. If something sounds confusing, it needs more refinement.

- Read it out loud as if to a child. If the explanation isn't simple enough or sounds confusing, that's a good indication that you need to reflect and refine.

- Go back to the source material, reviewing the parts you don't quite understand yet.

- Repeat until you have a simple explanation.

Step 4: Organize and Review

- To test your understanding in the real world, present your explanation to someone else. How effective was your explanation? What questions did they ask? What parts did they get confused about?

- When you're happy with your understanding, take the page you created with a simple explanation and put it into a binder. Following this technique for everything you learn gives you a binder full of learning that you can review a couple of times a year.

- Simplicity is the hallmark of true understanding. Challenge others who use jargon to explain concepts in simple terms, and their reactions may reveal their comprehension (or lack thereof).

- The Feynman Technique is the foundation for our 'blank sheet' approach to [supercharging your reading and retention](.).

Mnemonics

What is it?

Mnemonics

Mnemonics should ONLY be used when you learn something completely new! Not when you learn something you already know a lot about because then it will get confusing.

Keywords (similar sounding words) caesar -> salat

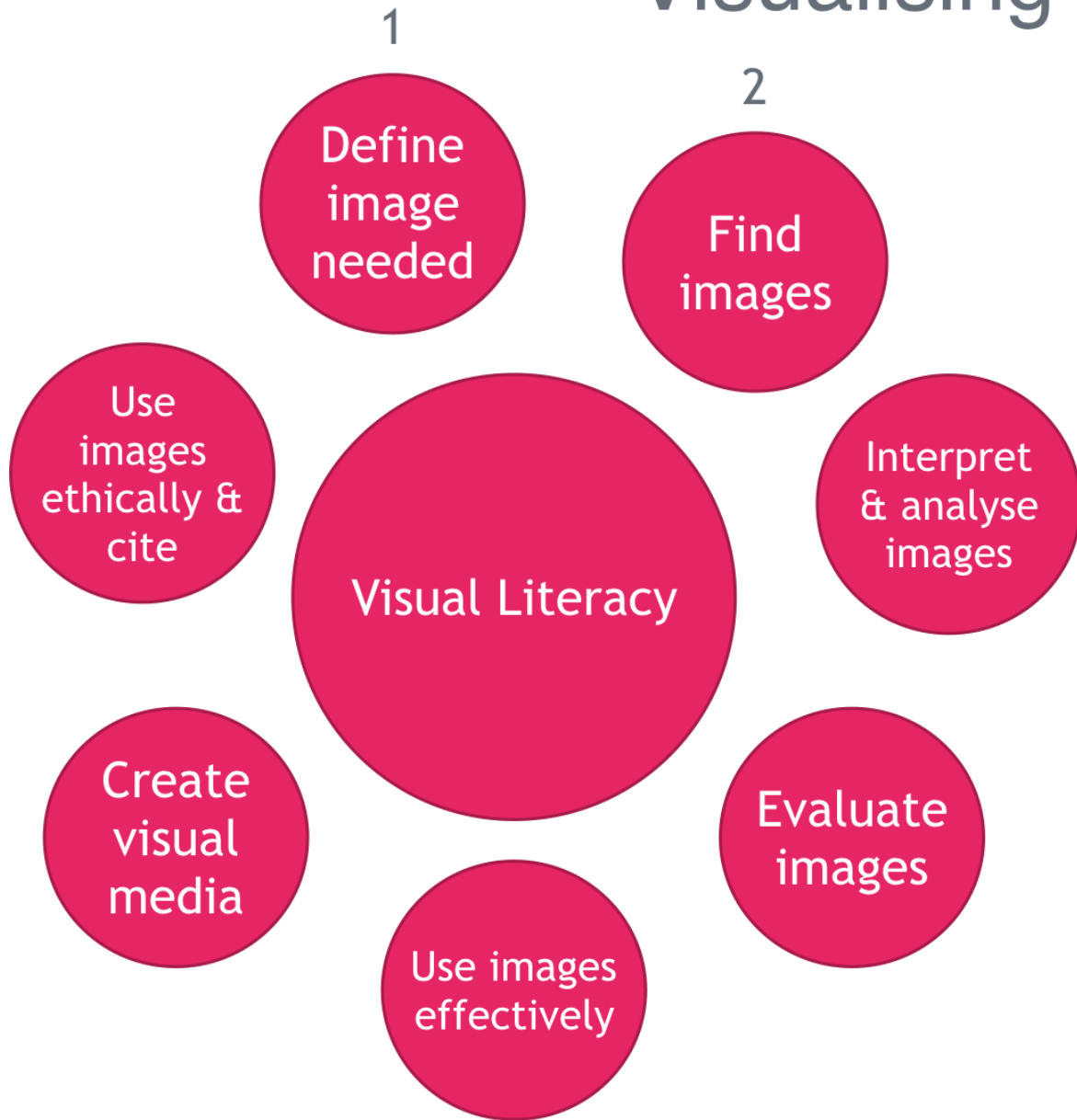Pegboard - one is fun, two is woooooo!

Letters - S.M.A.R.T.

F.E.A.R. - Face Everything and rise

Visualising difficult concepts

1

Define image needed

2

Find images

Use images ethically & cite

Visual Literacy

Interpret & analyse images

Create visual media

Evaluate images

Use images effectively

You **need** to *visualise to* understand.

If you want to think things through in a more creative way, you need to become visually literate.

- ✓ 1. Find images that describe what you need to learn
- ✓ 2. Use them to your advantage
- ✓ 3. Store them

Other ways to visualise content

Strategy 01

Create diagrams and other graphs

Strategy 02

Create "post its" and put them up in your apartment

Strategy 03

Start drawing what you have to learn

Strategy 04

Create drawings for paragraphs to summarise them

Strategy 05

Create infographics

Strategy 06

Visualise the information through creating a powerpoint presentation

Pomodoro Technique

= This popular time management method asks you to alternate pomodoros — focused work sessions — with frequent short breaks to promote sustained concentration and stave off mental fatigue.

- Set your timer for 25 minutes, and focus on a single task until the timer rings.
- When your session ends, mark off one pomodoro and record what you completed.
- Then enjoy a five-minute break.
- After four pomodoros, take a longer, more restorative 15-30 minute break.

WHAT IS THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE?

A method for staying focused and mentally fresh

STEP 1 ✏️ Pick a task

STEP 2 ⏳ Set a 25-minute timer

STEP 3 👨🏽‍💻 Work on your task until the time is up

STEP 4 ☕ Take a 5 minute break

STEP 5 🌳 Every 4 pomodoros, take a longer 15-30 minute break

Try the Pomodoro Technique if you...

- Find little distractions often derail the whole workday
- Consistently work past the point of optimal productivity
- Have lots of open-ended work that could take unlimited amounts of time (e.g., studying for an exam, researching a blog post, etc.)
- Are overly optimistic when it comes to how much you can get done in a day (aren't we all 😳)
- Enjoy gamified goal-setting
- Really like tomatoes

Flowtime Technique

- **Best for:** Maintaining your own unique flowstate while still allowing for breaks

- If frequent, rigid breaks disrupt your workflow rather than improving it

- Flowtime technique works with your brain by letting you set the duration of your work sessions and breaks → This flexibility helps you stay in your creative flow and prevents disruptions to your train of thought.

- To use the Flowtime technique, you'll need to log your productivity. Record when you start working and when you get distracted.
- Note how long you worked on a task, how often you got distracted, the length of your breaks, and when you stopped working.
- This is a flexible study technique with only one strict rule: you have to focus on one task at a time — <u>no multitasking!</u>

Step-by-step guide on how to use the Flowtime technique:

1. Track your work and break times using a spreadsheet, Notion, or your preferred method.

2. Decide which task you're working on.

3. Note what time you started working on your task.

4. Work until you feel you need a break, whether you're tired or distracted. Make a note of why you were distracted.

5. Write down the length of your break.

6. Repeat steps 1 to 5 for the rest of your work session.

7. Record what time you finished working.

8. Review your log to find your productivity flow.

Animedoro Technique

- **Best for:** Rewarding yourself for completing your to-do list

- Animedoro gives Pomodoro a modern update. It's ideal if you find yourself distracted by your favorite TV shows.

- Animedoro follows a similar structure to the Pomodoro technique of 25 minutes of work with 5-minute breaks. Then after four short breaks, you can take a longer break of around 15 minutes.

- Many people don't find these 5-minute breaks satisfying. You barely have time to make yourself something to eat.

- Animedoro mixes things up with 40 to 60 minutes of focused work, followed by a 20-minute break where you watch an episode of your favorite anime or TV shows.

- Watching a whole episode of a show you enjoy feels rewarding and helps you decompress.

- You'll also be working for a longer period, which means you can fully finish tasks without as many interruptions.

Time Blocking & Time Boxing Method

- **Best for:** Visualizing your schedule and productivity
- Time blocking and time boxing are similar (but separate) techniques that involve blocking off time, typically on a calendar, to complete tasks. They're ideal if you're juggling several projects simultaneously.

Focus	Client work	Client work	Client work	Marketing	Admin
	Mon	**Tue**	**Wed**	**Thu**	**Fri**
05:00 - 05:30	Wake up routine				
05:30 - 06:00					
06:00 - 06:30	Reading, Social, Chat				
06:30 - 07:00					
07:00 - 07:30	Email				
07:30 - 08:00	Project work	Project work	Project work	Writing, Planning, Site updates	Proposals, Invoicing, Follow ups
08:00 - 08:30					
08:30 - 09:00					
09:00 - 09:30					
09:30 - 10:00					
10:00 - 10:30	Emails, Social, Break				

Time blocking

- With time blocking, you decide what you'll work on and exactly when you'll work on it — for example, "I'll work on my essay on Monday between 3 PM and 4 PM."

- Many people use time blocking to map out their whole day or week across multiple tasks and projects. For example, you might have one time block for cleaning the kitchen, another for working on your essay, and another for cooking dinner all in the same day.

- By visually blocking off time to work on a task, you'll subconsciously work toward staying on schedule, even if your task doesn't necessarily need to be finished during that block.

- Time blocks are flexible, which means you could keep working on an assignment past 4 PM if you feel up to it. Or something might come up at 3 PM that requires you to move the block altogether.

- At the end of the day, you can review your time blocks to see which ones you didn't stick to. Then, update the rest of your time blocks accordingly.

Time boxing

- Time boxing involves setting a strict deadline for when the work will be completed. So if you box off 3 PM to 4 PM to work on your essay, you'll stop working right at 4 PM as planned.

- While time blocks tend to be shorter, time boxes can span days, weeks, and even months. <u>Because there's always a hard deadline involved, this method is great for managing big projects.</u>

- The best way to lay out time blocking and time boxing is by color coding your Google Calendar with different blocks for different tasks. Notion is also a great tool for time blocking and time boxing.

Eat That Frog Technique

- **Best for:** Tackling important or difficult tasks

- The Eat That Frog technique comes from a Mark Twain quote:

  - "Eat a live frog first thing in the morning and nothing worse will happen to you the rest of the day."

- "Eating a live frog" is a metaphor for completing the most difficult task first. And while Twain mentions the morning in his quote, you don't necessarily need to be an early riser to benefit from this method.

- This method tends to work well for several reasons. Getting difficult tasks out of the way keeps you motivated and productive (and also ensures your high-priority tasks are already done by the time the afternoon slump hits).

Tips for the Eat That Frog technique:

1. Identify your difficult task the night before.

2. Don't plan too far in advance; focus only on your next task.

3. Organize your tasks in order of difficulty and priority.

4. Eat your frog first thing before starting any other task.

52/17 Rule

- The 52/17 Rule is based on a <u>study</u> published in The Muse. The study looked at the most productive users of the DeskTime app and their work patterns. The researchers found that the most productive users, on average, worked for 52 minutes before taking a 17-minute break.

- This method relies on the "100% dedication theory", which means <u>you're fully invested and focused on your work during the 52 minutes.</u> Then, during your break, <u>you're fully removed from your work and resting, without checking emails or scrolling on social media.</u>

- The 52/17 Rule is very similar to Pomodoro, but again relies on the idea that more than 25 minutes of focused work is needed to accomplish large tasks.

- Plus, a 17-minute break is far more satisfying and helps you refresh your attention span. **<u>Taking a complete rest during this time avoids what the study refers to as "cognitive boredom."</u>** Working for several hours in a row means you lose focus — a complete break helps your brain refresh.

Eisenhower Matrix

- **Best for:** Prioritizing, delegating, and eliminating tasks
- President Dwight D. Eisenhower invented the Eisenhower Matrix to help him navigate difficult tasks.

The Eisenhower Matrix splits tasks up into 4 quadrants:

1. **Do first**: Includes tasks you need to accomplish immediately, which have strict deadlines

2. **Schedule**: Includes long-term assignments without an immediate deadline that can be scheduled for the future or later in the day

3. **Delegate**: Includes tasks that need doing but aren't urgent and can be assigned to someone else

4. **Don't do**: Includes distracting jobs that aren't compulsory which you don't need to complete

GTD Method

- **Best for:** Capturing all your ideas and managing big projects

- Getting Things Done (GTD) is a time management technique originally described by productivity consultant David Allen.

- According to the GTD method, keeping too much information in your brain often means you spend more time thinking and fretting about doing tasks than actually doing them. <u>The GTD method involves getting tasks out of your mind and organized in an external system, whether it be a notebook, task management app, or something else.</u>

- Recording your tasks in a "second brain" helps you focus on what's important and ensures all those brilliant ideas that come to you in the shower get captured and remembered.

The GTD method revolves around five "fundamentals:"

- **Record**: Gather your tasks and information in an organization tool or database.
- **Clarify:** Decide whether a task is actionable or can be deleted, referenced, or put on hold.
- **Organize:** Arrange your categorized tasks with reminders based on their importance.
- **Reflect:** Regularly review your tasks and categories to stay up to date.
- **Engage:** Use your organizational tool to make decisions on assignments.
- The GTD method is super helpful if you often feel overwhelmed from juggling different responsibilities or sometimes forget small details.

- Todoist
- Evernote
- ProofHub
- Nifty
- Nirvana
- TickTick
- Google Keep
- Trello
- Asana

Don't Break the Chain (Seinfeld) Method

- **Best for:** Building consistency by maintaining a study streak

- Comedian Jerry Seinfeld once shared some advice that can help improve your consistency and work ethic:

- Seinfeld told a young comedian that they should try to write a new joke daily to improve. When Seinfeld was starting out, he had a big calendar in his apartment, and for every day he wrote a new joke, he would put a big red "X" on that day.

- After a few days, he had an unbroken chain of crosses, creating a visual reminder that motivated him to keep working and not break the chain. **Building a chain like this makes completing your daily goal a habit. Habits are hard to establish, but once established, they're hard to break.**

The best way to accomplish the Don't Break the Chain method is

- to pick an important but easy task to achieve daily.

- Start with a task so simple that there's no way you can avoid completing it.

- Keep at it, and it'll eventually become a part of your daily routine.

- *When you're first starting out, avoid the temptation to aim too high or go too big. For example, writing several thousand words every day probably isn't sustainable. Instead, try setting a goal of just one paragraph or page per day.*

The SQ3R Method

- The SQ3R method is a reading comprehension technique that helps students identify important facts and retain information within their textbook.

- SQ3R (or SQRRR) is an acronym that stands for the five steps of the reading comprehension process.

- **Survey**: Instead of reading the entire book, start by skimming the first chapter and taking notes on any headings, subheadings, images, or other standout features like charts.
- **Question**: Formulate questions around the chapter's content, such as, What is this chapter about? What do I already know about this subject?
- **Read**: Begin reading the full chapter and look for answers to the questions you formulated.
- **Recite**: After reading a section, summarize in your own words what you just read. Try recalling and identifying major points and answering any questions from the second step.
- **Review**: Once you have finished the chapter, it's important to review the material to fully understand it. Quiz yourself on the questions you created and re-read any portions you need to.
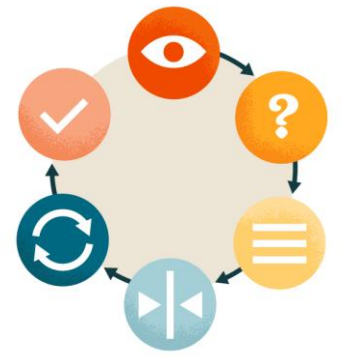
Retrieval Practice

- **<u>Retrieval practice</u>** is based on the concept of remembering at a later time.

- Recalling an answer to a question improves learning more than looking for the answer in your textbook.

- And, remembering and writing down the answer to a flashcard is a lot more effective than thinking you know the answer and flipping the card over early.

If you practice retrieval, you are more likely to remember the information later on. Ways you can implement the retrieval process into your study routine.

- **Utilize practice tests**: Use practice tests or questions to quiz yourself, without looking at your book or notes.

- **Make your own questions**: Be your own teacher and create questions you think would be on a test. If you're in a study group, encourage others to do the same, and trade questions.

- **Use flashcards**: Create flashcards, but make sure to practice your retrieval technique. Instead of flipping a card over prematurely, write the answer down and then check.

The PQ4R Method

- This method takes an active approach to learning that improves memorization and understanding of the topic.
- Similar to the SQ3R method above, PQ4R is an acronym that stands for the six steps in the process.

- **Preview**: Preview the information before you start reading to get an idea of the subject. Skim the material and read only the headers, subheadings, and highlighted text.
- **Question**: Ask yourself questions related to the topic, such as, What do I expect to learn? What do I already know about this topic?
- **Read**: Read the information one section at a time and try to identify answers to your questions.
- **Reflect**: Did you answer all of your questions? If not, go back and see if you can find the answer.
- **Recite**: In your own words, either speak or write down a summary of the information you just read.
- **Review**: Look over the material one more time and answer any questions that have not yet been answered.

3-2-1 learning method

- After the lesson, students record 3 things they learned from the lesson.

- Students record 2 things that they found interesting and that they'd like to learn more about.

- Students record 1 question they still have about the material.

How to study when tired after school → 3-2-1 METHOD

- Begin w 3 mins of relaxation

- 2 minutes deep breathing exercise

- 1 minute spent mentally preparing for focused learning

- Why?
- ➢ Easier transition from uni to study mode
- ➢Reduces stress and enhances focus
- ➢Optimizes study efficiency