Module 6: Memory
Topic 3 Content: Storage

Introduction

After you encode information, you then store it in your short-term or long-term memory. Click the ***NEXT*** button to explore the difference between the two types of storage.

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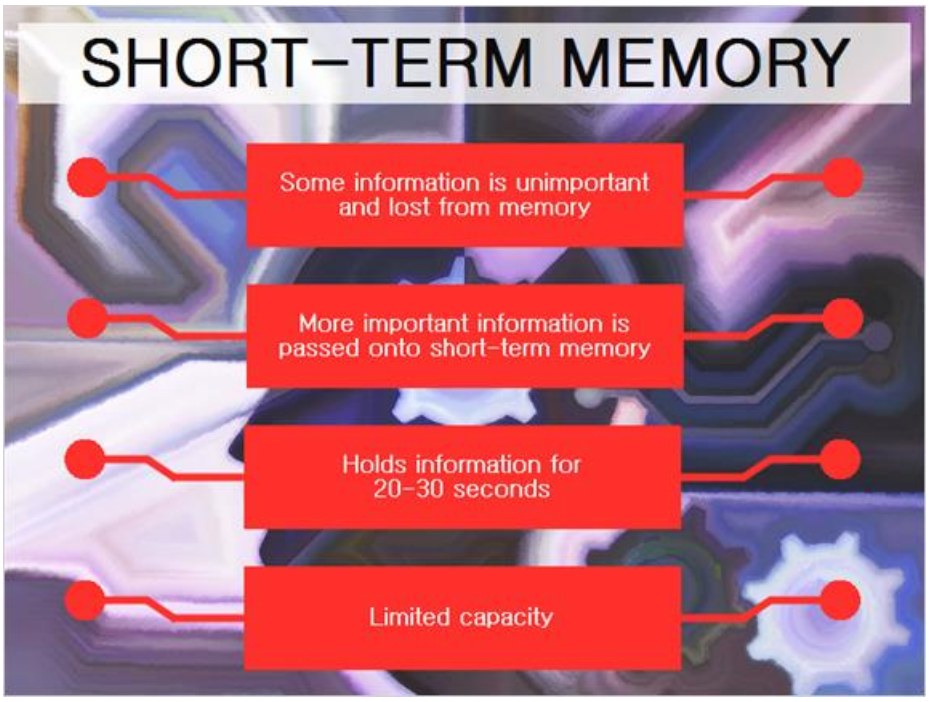
Topic 3 Content: Storage

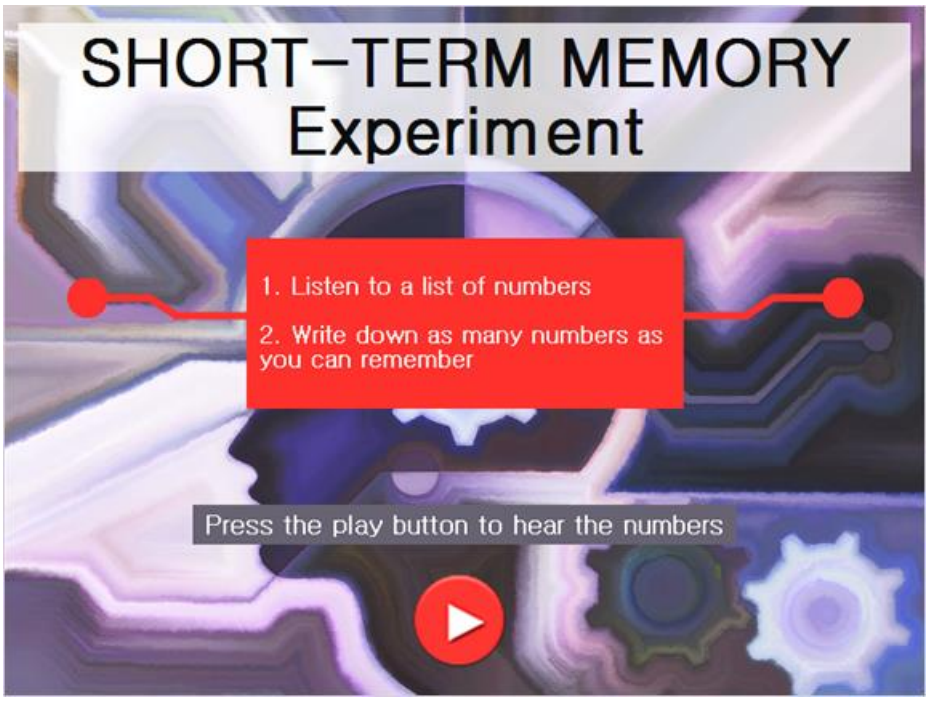
Short-Term Memory



Although some information you receive is considered unimportant, and then lost quickly from your memory, other information makes a greater impression and is passed along to short-term memory. Short-term memory holds a small amount of information for up to twenty or thirty seconds. However, strategies exist that can help you hold onto information in your short-term memory for longer. For example, you can repeat information over and over, a process called rehearsal. You may have already found rehearsal helpful when you study notes for a test. However, short-term memory has a limited capacity, meaning it cannot hold very much information.

Click the ***NEXT*** button to test your short-term memory.

Short-Term Memory Experiment

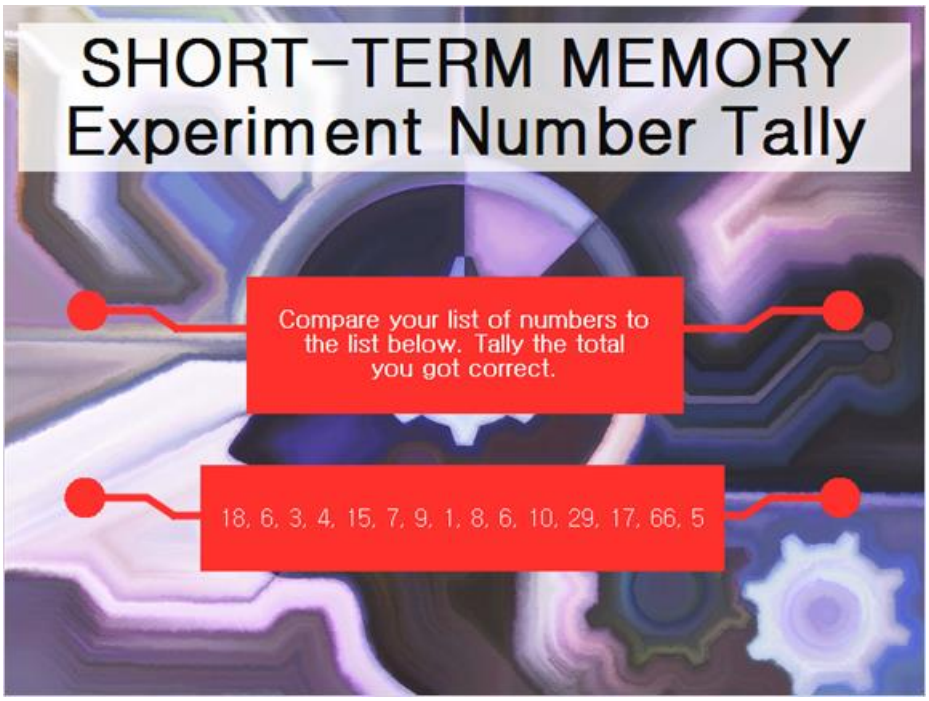


To do this experiment, you will listen to a list of numbers. After you hear every number, write down as many as you can remember on a piece of scrap paper. When you are ready to hear the list, press the play button.

Audio List of Numbers

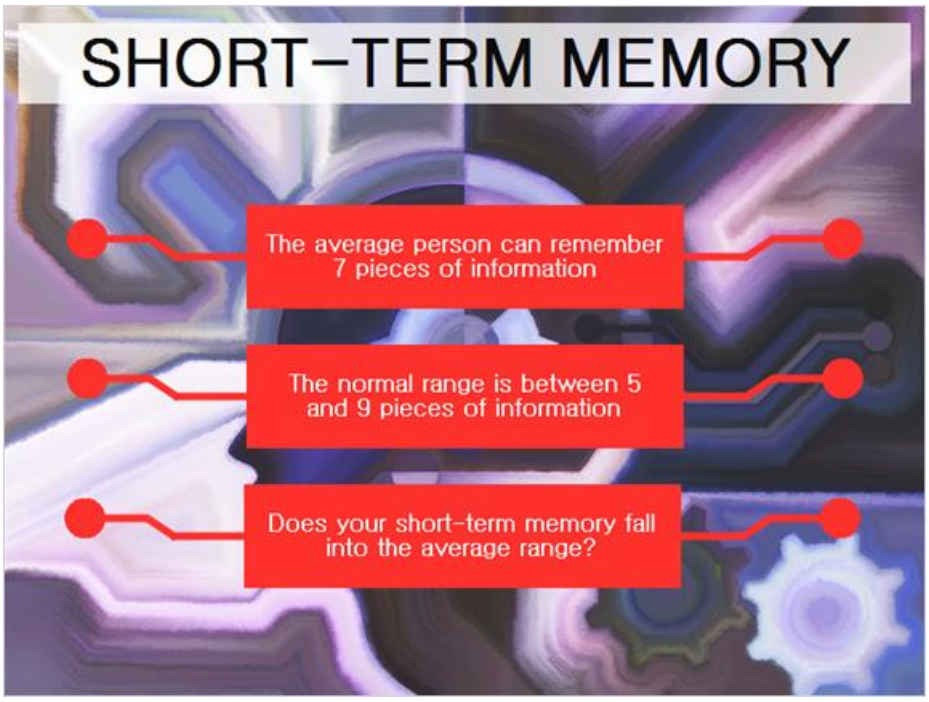
18, 6, 3, 4, 15, 7, 9, 1, 8, 6, 10, 29, 17, 66, 5

Tally of Numbers Correct



Compare your list of numbers to the list below. Tally the total you got correct.

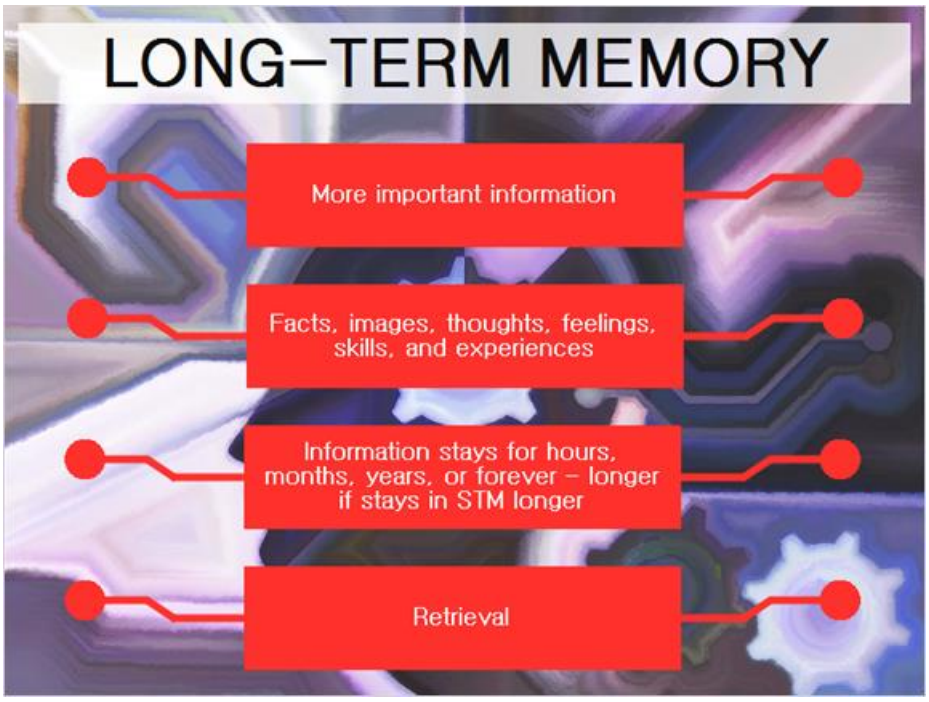
Short-Term Memory Continued



The average person can remember about seven pieces of information at a time, and the normal range is between five and nine pieces of information. This is the reason that the phone numbers in most countries are between five and seven digits long.

Does your short-term memory fall in the average range based on the number of digits you remembered in this experiment?

Long-Term Memory



More important information proceeds to long-term memory. Types of information that go into long-term memory include facts, images, thoughts, feelings, skills, and experiences. Once something enters your long-term memory, it may stay for hours, months, years, or forever. Research says that the longer information remains in your short-term memory, the longer it is likely to stay in your long-term memory. When you are trying to gain access to information in your long-term memory, which is often difficult to do, it is called *retrieval*.