

Syllabus: Keep What You Learn

Instructor: **Bill Powell**
Tues. and Thu. **12:50 – 1:40.**

Summary: Learn to memorize, improve your other classes

Welcome! In this class, you'll learn how to memorize **50, 100, 500** or even **thousands** of facts. With special **memory techniques**, you'll begin to **keep what you learn**. For instance:

- history facts
- vocabulary meanings
- definitions
- literature facts
- science facts
- math formulas

Instead of *hoping* you'll remember such things, you'll *know* that you *will*.

Class Format

Each class is 50 minutes, as usual. Many classes will be lectures. Others will include **class discussions**, as we practice making **mnemonics** (memory prompts).

We'll have **frequent quizzes**, but **no tests or papers** on the material in this class. Instead, you'll do **memory projects**, where you **memorize information from your other classes**. Memorizing does take work, but this way, you can do the work on what you *already need to study*.

Required Materials

There is no required textbook. Instead, I will provide handouts.

You must keep the handouts organized and **bring all handouts to every class**. I suggest a **binder** to keep them organized.

Please bring to every class: your class handouts, looseleaf paper, and a pen.

At home, you'll need a tool to maintain your set of flashcards.

- I suggest the free **computer program**: Anki [<http://ichi2.net/anki>].
- But you can use **index cards** instead, with **small sticky notes** to mark study batches.

Fee: 5.00 to cover the cost of handouts.

I can also offer index cards and sticky notes at cost, if there's a demand.

Grade Breakdown

25	Quizzes
25	Attendance, Participation
25	Memory Projects
25	Daily Flashcard Review
100	TOTAL Grade for Class

Quizzes

- We will **begin each class with a short quiz**.
- If you miss the quiz, you get a **0** and a Tardiness penalty.
- If you bring a **written excuse**, you remove the Tardiness penalty, but not the 0.
- (With a quiz every class, 1 or 2 missed quizzes won't destroy your grade.)
- I may offer a quiz makeup project, if there's demand.

Attendance

For absence or tardiness not to affect your grade, I need a **note or call from your parent or guardian**.

Participation

- I will note whether you **listen** and pay attention.
- Feel free to **ask questions**, though you don't have to if you don't need to.
- Sometimes, you'll need to **contribute ideas**, as we make up **mnemonics** (memory prompts).

Memory Projects

Memory projects will include:

- **preparation work** for memorizing
- **memorizing information**
- **presenting** what you've memorized, both in **written tests** and in **recitations**

Daily Flashcard Review

Modern research has shown that for **efficient review**, your brain needs **proper scheduling** of each card. As you start to study lots of cards, you'll need a **short review every day**. This habit of daily review is so central that it will be graded.

I'll provide **logsheets**, and you'll track whether or not you review each day. The minimum daily review time is short: 15 minutes. But you must **review every day except Sunday**.

The sheets must be **signed by a parent/guardian and brought to class every two weeks** for a brief inspection. This will encourage you as you develop this habit.

You will *not* be graded on whether you get each card right or not. **You simply need to review.**

Sunday is optional. A single missed day each week is a minor setback, if you schedule your studies properly. I don't want to interfere with your practice of Sunday rest.

Topics we'll cover in this class:

- Introduction
 - Why we have “bad” memories
 - Why our memories are actually amazing
 - You can train your memory
- Five basic steps to memorization
- Beginner pitfalls to avoid
- Spaced Repetition: Reviewing the right material at the right time
- Organizing information
- History of the Art of Memory
- Oral mnemonics (memory prompts)
 - Mnemonics based on rhythm, rhyme, or acrostics
- Visual mnemonics, and using your imagination
- Storing your mnemonics (the loci method)
- Memorizing specific kinds of information
 - vocabulary
 - definitions
 - numbers
 - years, history facts
 - literature facts
 - science facts
 - math formulas
- In-class practice and recitations