

EPISODE 79
LEVEL B2

READING COMPREHENSION



MEMORY

David Thomas failed all his maths exams and left school with no qualifications, yet he has gone into the Guinness Book of Records by **reciting** (= to say sth that you have learnt to an audience) from memory 22500 digits of the mathematical constant, pi. After 5 months of training, in which he spent 10 hours a day **memorising** (= to learn sth perfectly) a quarter of million digits, he took part in a mental battle. Witnesses watched **in awe** (= in respect and admiration) as he broke another record, earning the title “Most Powerful Memory”. If they are given **random** (= chosen without any particular method) numbers to learn, most people can memorise only between seven to ten **digits** (=one of the written numbers). However, he can remember more facts than anyone in Europe. There is a theory that anyone can improve their memory by using specialised techniques. They involve linking everything to familiar people or objects and **associating** (= to form a connection in your mind) numbers with images. David runs courses on memory training and his **fees** (= money that you pay to a professional person) are 600\$ a day.

Do the quiz below to check your memory?:

1. I find it difficult to remember where I've put things
2. I remember people's faces but often forget their names
3. I tend to forget phone numbers
4. I **jot** things **down** (= write down) to remember them
5. I learn things **by heart** (= to memorise)
6. I have some tricks or memory **aids** (= something that makes it easier to do sth) that I use to help me remember words



EXERCISE 1

Decide if the sentences below are true or false. Correct the false ones.

1. He is totally in awe with his father means that he respects the father a lot.
2. Yesterday I jotted down a few new words during the lecture means I made a few notes.
3. I would never recite any poem in front of so many people means I would never remember it.

ENGLISH IN USE



Guess the meaning of the following expressions from the context:

1. He never writes phone numbers down – he just **commits them to memory**.
2. They went back to the place where they'd spent their honeymoon and **took a stroll down memory lane**.
3. The police are reconstructing the crime to try to **jog the memory** of possible witnesses.
4. Streets lit by gas lamps are still **within living memory**.

Commit sth to memory = make yourself remember

Take a stroll down memory lane = remember some of the happy things you did in the past

To jog the memory = make you remember

Within living memory = can be remembered by people still alive

MEMORY VS MIND

EXERCISE 2

Complete the sentences with memory or mind:

1. Out of sight, out of
2. The class reunion gave us a great opportunity for a trip down lane.
3. I'm sorry I forgot to post your letters. It just slipped my
4. You can't remember what you did last night? Let me jog your
5. Please bear in what I told you about.
6. I was so embarrassed that my just went blank.
7. It never crossed my To tell him about our meeting.

8. Streets full of horse-drawn carriages are still within living
9. I just wanted to give her a surprise, but nothing suitable came to
10. Try to commit your mobile phone number to

IDIOM CLOSE-UP



A TRAIN OF THOUGHT = A SERIES OF CONSECUTIVE THOUGHTS

Oh no, I've lost my train of thoughts. Can you repeat, please?

PHRASAL VERBS CLOSE-UP



EXERCISE 3



BRING BACK MEMORIES = TO CAUSE YOUR MEMORIES TO BE BACK AGAIN IN YOUR MIND
LOOK BACK ON = TO THINK ABOUT A TIMEOR EVENT IN THE PAST

Looking back on it, I've absolutely no idea why I said that.
He wants to bring back all memories from the childhood.

NEWS



There is a 41-year-old woman, an administrative assistant from California known in the medical literature only as "AJ," who remembers almost every day of her life since age 11. There is an 85-year-old man, a retired lab technician called "EP," who remembers only

his most recent thought. She might have the best memory in the world. He could very well have the worst. "My memory flows like a movie—nonstop and uncontrollable," says AJ. She remembers that at 12:34 p.m. on Sunday, August 3, 1986, a young man she had a crush on called her on the telephone. She remembers what happened on Murphy Brown on December 12, 1988. And she remembers that on March 28, 1992, she had lunch with her father at the Beverly Hills Hotel. She remembers world events and trips to the grocery store, the weather and her emotions. **Virtually** every day is there. She's not easily **stumped**.

Virtually = used for emphasising that a statement is completely true

Be stumped by sth = you cannot explain it or answer it easily

KEY TO EXERCISES

Ex. 1

1. True
2. True
3. False

Ex. 2

1. mind
2. memory
3. mind
4. memory
5. mind
6. mind
7. mind
8. memory
9. mind
10. memory