ASC Workshop Plan

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| Theme | Workshop LEad |  | Date |
| **Retrieval Practice** | Adam Bacchus |  | January, 2018 |

Overview

This workshop explores recommendations found in research surrounding retrieval practice. Students will discuss retrieval practice strategies they are currently using in their study routines, and explore new ways to optimize and expand upon those techniques. Students will then engage in the active application of retrieval practice strategies in order to increase their skills in retaining and retrieving of new information in RRC courses.

| Workshop Guide | | |  | |
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| Objectives | **Participants will be able to:**   * Identify why retrieval practice is a key study behavior and how it related to the physical mechanism of memory. * Describe four strategies for successfully integrating retrieval practice into a study plan. * Demonstrate the integration of retrieval practice techniques in group study. | | | |
| REsources | * See [www.rrc.ca/success](http://www.rrc.ca/success) (with direct link to ppt) for slide deck and handouts:   + Retrieval practice slides (.ppt)   + Retrieval practice activity handout * Data projector & laptop * Whiteboard and markers | | | |
| **Process** | **Person** | **Action** | | **Time** |
| introduce yourself as an academic coach & introduce topic | Workshop Lead | **Slide 1: Title**  Introduce Self and RRC’s Academic Success Center.  Introduce topic and elicit student’s prior knowledge.  “Retrieval Practice. What an unusual name for a workshop! What do you think we will be covering in this workshop based on the title alone?”  “We will answer that question together as we proceed into this workshop.” | | 1 min |
| activate critical thinking on Retrieval Practice | Workshop Lead | **Slide 2: Introduce class activity**  Let students know of the activity at the end of this workshop. It will require that they have collected the 4 to 5 points that really stuck with them over this workshop. Advise students to write these points down. | | 30 sec |
| Activate curiosity and interest in Retrieval Practice | Workshop Lead  Students  Workshop Lead | **Slide 3: Focusing question**  “Which of these two scenarios do you think is more likely to produce a student that will perform well in a test?”  Student responses. Ask the students \*why\* they selected their answer. Encourage open discussion with challenges and defense.  **<click>**  Explain that typical student consensus resides with the option to ‘Maintain knowledge’. But what many students are surprised to learn is that there is a **neurological explanation** in support of this answer. | | 1 min |
| Provide Expert Knowledge about the workings of Memory | Workshop Lead | **Slide 4: The mechanics of memory**  “Encoding and retrieving memories are physical actions that the body performs.  “The human body handles all its physical functions in a similar manner. If a particular challenge is encountered repeatedly, the body will adapt in order to overcome that challenge with greater ease. Usually with the allocation of more biological matter to bolster the elements of the body being taxed.  “Example: If I was to do 10 push-ups every morning after waking up, what would happen? Over time, muscles would build in my chest and arms to make the task of push-ups easier.  “The same thing happens when I attempt to recall a fact that I just learned in class. If I keep attempting to recall the fact, my body will over time \*physically bolster\* the neural pathway that is allows us to reconstruct that fact by making the neurons (brain cells) along that path more robust. \*\*This is an observable phenomenon!\*\*  “This means that when a fact becomes easier to recall due to repetition, it is because your repetition has \*actually changed your brain\* to create a more conductive path for that memory.” | | 3 mins |
| Provide Expert Knowledge about the workings of Memory | Workshop Lead | **Slide 5: Interesting caveat**  “The research also shows that once you understand the material you are trying to learn, extra re-reading doesn’t help you remember the facts. It is only \*attempting to remember the facts\* that makes you better at remembering the facts.”  Ask: So what does that mean for students’ studying?  <It means, sitting in front of a book, passively reading for hours on end will do very little to help you in a test.>  *Workshop lead gives a quick reminder to students of their responsibility to write down the 4-5 things that impact them over this presentation.* | | 1 min |
| Generate practical strategies based on expert knowledge  (This is most meaningful for students when they are the ones providing this list) | Students  Workshop Lead  (Workshop lead) | **Slide 6-10: Strategies**  Students generate a list of the strategies that they use, or have heard of that involve retrieval practice.  Workshop lead records student ideas on whiteboard and encourages as much detail and explanation from students as possible. **The ideal is students teaching this entire section of the presentation to other students.**  In an ideal session, the workshop lead will not need to display slides 7-10 as the students will have already listed those options and suggestions on how to implement them for the whiteboard brainstorm.  Workshop lead reinforces students’ ideas lead fills in details.  **Sketch what you know** – works best right after your first interaction with a new topic. \*Student must put away source material\* before sketching for it to be retrieval practice  **Making a test** - for a study partner can become an all-inclusive study routine in itself. Plan to meet with a partner every week with a quiz of the 20 most test-worthy topics from class. How many times are you attempting to recall the material with that one activity?   1. Deciding what in your notes is likely to be on a test. 2. Writing the test for the partner. 3. Creating the answer key. 4. Doing your partner’s test. 5. Correcting your partner’s test. 6. Teaching your partner what they could have answered better.   All from one activity.  **Cue Cards** – Set up a question on one side and answer on the other; or a term on one side and definition on the other; or concept title on one side and explanation of the concept on the other. When using the cards, if you look right away at the answer, it’s not retrieval practice. It is important to give yourself time to \*struggle\* with what’s on the back side of the card without looking. Try 20 seconds. (Let students experience 20 seconds on silence)  **Teaching someone else** – Teaching someone else a topic is one of the most effective ways to learn that topic. If there is no one around to teach, try teaching to a stuffed animal, plant or pet. If you are faltering in your recall of the material, try creating a sketch outline to jog your memory. | | 20 mins |
| Practical details | Workshop lead | **Slide 11: Checking your accuracy**  “We have an expression, ‘Practice makes…’. The common response is ‘Perfect’ but that isn’t true is it? If you keep practicing the wrong way of doing an activity, you will only become more stuck in doing the wrong thing. The reality is ‘Practice makes permanent.’”  “Check the accuracy of your answers after you finish a retrieval practice activity to ensure that what is becoming permanent is the correct answer.” | | 1 mins |
| Practical details | Workshop Lead | **Slide 12: Boost your reps**  “Most of these retrieval practice exercises are very quick activities. This means that you can fit them in more often in the day; between other activities. Take advantage of this!!” | | 2 min |
| Practical details | Workshop Lead | **Slide 13: Bottom line**  To Mention: Different programs place different demands on their students for memorization of facts, but for most of the programs here at Red River College, this is truly the case.  Give the students a **few extra seconds** for the fact on the screen to sink in. | | 1 min |
| Students put their skills into practice by testing each other | Students and Workshop lead  Students  Students and Workshop lead | **Slide 14 – Slide 15: Class Activity**  Instructions on handout and on slides.  Students are divided into two teams by the workshop lead. Each \*team\* gets an activity handout.  Each team has 10 mins to generate a list of challenge questions about the workshop. These questions are created from the teammates’ lists of 4-5 important points that they’ve been creating over the last half hour.  Game begins: Workshop lead acts as a facilitator and a scorekeeper. Decide which team asks first (I usually have the team speakers play rock, paper, scissors). That team asks a question that the other team has 1 minute to confer and answer. Then the next team. So on until the end of the time allocated for the workshop or all five questions for each team has been exhausted. | | 20 min |
| Closure | Workshop Lead | **Close with a question. “Why do you think we ended with this activity?”**  Answer: Even a fun activity like this is retrieval practice!  **Slide 16 – 18: Help is available**  Remind students of next week’s workshop. | | 1 min |