

SSC Study Strategies: Retaining Information

PRACTICE

We all want to make the most of our study time. In order to be the most effective AND efficient we can possibly be, consider the following strategies to commit information to memory, and to learn material until you can't get it wrong. Learning something once won't be enough. You must practice the material in different ways in order to make it stick in your brain long-term.

DRAW AND RE-DRAW DIAGRAMS

- Reconstruct images/information to capture ideas graphically/spatially
- Redraw graphs and images from memory
- Replace words with symbols or drawings
- Write out the steps or create a diagram of how to solve math or science problems
- Draw diagrams and charts from memory
- Take your notes using a mind-map to see in a broader picture how concepts relate

MAKE YOUR OWN PRACTICE TEST QUESTIONS

- Write out example exam questions to practice
- Take practice exams in an environment similar to the exam
- Practice multiple choice questions
- Compare and contrast major theories or concept
- Practice changing the details of the problem and see if you can still solve it
- Reflect on what skills the professor wants you to perform to build practice questions
- Can you justify why you think you're right? Can you explain why another answer is wrong?

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PROVIDE EXPLANATION/SUMMARY

- Discuss topics with others to validate understanding (peers, professors, others)
- Explain ideas to someone else using real-life examples
- Describe the information to someone who wasn't there
- Teach the material to someone else as if you were lecturing
- Ask others to hear your understanding of a topic
- Explain your notes or a concept from class to another person
- Imagine yourself talking through the concept and remember in an auditory fashion
- Speak your answers aloud (quietly) or in your head
- Explain aloud the answers to flash cards, reading questions, or test questions
- Recite the main points at the end of each section; explain concepts aloud
- Summarize your notes/the concepts from the textbook on an audio file

WRITE AND RE-WRITE IDEAS

- Write out words multiple times on a white board
- Create a written study guide
- Create reference sheets for easy access while studying
- Summarize ideas and concepts in your own words
- Write paragraphs formulating the ideas from your notes
- Analyze diagrams/graphs and turn them into statements and/or descriptions
- Write songs, poems, or rhymes to remember better
- Make up puzzles or games to learn the information

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MAKE CONNECTIONS

- Generate or listen for examples of principles; i.e., real life examples
- Think of applications for the information
- Seek out exhibits, samples, photographs, collections, solutions
- Explore case studies as examples of concepts
- Connect your lecture notes with the notes you took from the book
- Arrange information into lists, words into hierarchies
- Recall learning/concepts from experiments, field trips, or other classes
- Participate in study groups and review sessions
- Practice recalling your notes/reading pages and where things are
- Use notecards to quiz yourself on concepts

PRACTICE:

Three practice strategies I'm going to try are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

How I plan to use those strategies:

For _____ I'm going to try _____.

For _____ I'm going to try _____.

For _____ I'm going to try _____.

PRO TIP: WORK ACCORDING TO FOCUSED STUDY SESSIONS

Now that you know your three new strategies that you will try, and you know the class(es) that you will try them in, think about how you are going to spread your studying out. Not sure what this means? Refer to the **Focused Study Sessions** box on the SSC Study Cycle diagram. Make your studying work for you!