

NZQA Assessment Support Material

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| Unit standard | 30507 | | | | |
| Title | Write a short text under test conditions in English for an academic purpose | | | | |
| Level | 3 | Credits | 5 | Version | 1 |

Student guidelines

CONDITIONS OF ASSESSMENT

This is an **open book assessment**.



- You will have a maximum of 90 minutes to complete this task.
- Your writing must be in your own words.
- You may use an unannotated copy of the resource document(s) during the assessment.
- You may use an English or a bilingual dictionary. You should not use electronic devices except for word processing.
- You should ensure your writing has as few errors as possible.
- Read through your writing using the checklist below to ensure you have met all the requirements. Then make any changes you need to your writing.
- You cannot resubmit this piece of writing.

Assessment activity

The candidate must write one piece of writing of approximately 300 words.

Academic purpose: A discussion followed by an evaluation.

You have been reading about learning strategies. Use the resource documents provided below and your knowledge on this topic to write an essay answering the following **research question**:

Some people suggest that new information can be learnt through memory techniques including using our senses. However, others argue that many of these strategies do not improve students' learning. Discuss both points of view and evaluate the effectiveness of some of the different strategies.

Student Checklist

| In this assessment task you will need to show you can do the following: | PC |
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| Write approximately 300 words. | |
| <p>Answer the question by defining and developing the topic as required by the academic purpose, research question and academic audience. For example, a discussion essay will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An introduction which identifies the topic and outlines the different viewpoints on the issue. • Paragraphs that focus on advantages and disadvantages followed by evaluation. • A conclusion that sums up the viewpoints and may include evaluation and recommendations. | 1.1 |
| <p>Develop the ideas and use the resource material to support your answer. This includes paragraphs with topic sentences.</p> <p>The topic sentence will be followed by supporting detail that may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expanding • explaining • giving examples • supporting with ideas from resource material through quoting or using your own words. | 1.2 |
| <p>Structure your text in a logical way. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an introduction • body paragraphs • a conclusion. <p>Use cohesive devices to link ideas within a paragraph and between paragraphs. These may include:</p> <p>Grammatical cohesive devices to link ideas clearly e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connectives e.g. <i>However, Firstly, Also, Further, Though, In addition</i> • conjunctions e.g. <i>and, but, so, yet</i> • substitution e.g. <i>The same issue can occur...</i> • ellipsis e.g. <i>and (the students) may be unable...</i> <p>Lexical cohesive devices to connect words such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • synonyms i.e. a word or phrase that means exactly or nearly the same as another word or phrase • antonyms i.e. a word opposite in meaning to another • repetition • collocation i.e. when words go together e.g. spend time • word sets e.g. <i>Social media - Twitter, Facebook.</i> <p>Referential cohesive devices to refer back to previous information or point forward such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personal pronouns e.g. <i>it, its, they, them</i> • demonstratives e.g. <i>this, these, that, those</i> (pronouns); <i>the</i> (definite article); <i>here, now, there, then</i> (adverbs) • comparatives e.g. <i>same/different; advantage/disadvantage.</i> | 1.3 |
| Use a formal writing style appropriate to an academic context. This includes: | |

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| <p>Appropriate vocabulary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • academic vocabulary • specialised vocabulary • correct word choice and part of speech. <p>Appropriate grammar:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • verb forms e.g. <i>If a teacher decides ...</i>(active) <i>cameras can be used...</i> (passive), <i>This could mean...</i> (modals) • the use of ellipsis and substitution to avoid repetition (see above) • nominalisation i.e. verbs turned into nouns e.g. <i>The use of mobile cameras...</i> <p>Formal tone such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • objective language e.g. <i>It is evident...</i> rather than <i>I think...</i> • the use of hedging or imprecise language e.g. <i>The majority believe ...</i> rather than <i>everyone believes; This could mean...</i> • formal language instead of slang or colloquial expressions • the full form of words instead of contractions or abbreviations e.g. <i>do not</i> instead of <i>don't</i>; <i>For example</i> instead of <i>e.g.</i> | 1.4 |
| <p>Use a variety of sentence structures such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • simple sentences e.g. <i>Mobile phones can assist language learning in several ways.</i> • compound sentences e.g. <i>Students can record themselves and more clearly hear their mistakes.</i> • complex sentences e.g. <i>Though mobile phones can be useful, there are also some disadvantages.</i> | 1.5 |
| <p>Acknowledge source material used in the text (1.6). This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quotations e.g. <i>This will help “learners to ‘notice’ grammar around them” (Norton, 2014).</i> • citation e.g. <i>Further, the teacher can encourage students to use social media such as Twitter and Facebook to practice writing in English (Norton, 2014).</i> • paraphrasing i.e. main points from the source material on an idea are put into the writer’s own words. | 1.6 |
| <p>Proof-read and edit your work.</p> | |

Resource documents to use for this assessment

Text 1: Improving learning: Strategies that work

Students of all ages use a range of strategies to learn information; however, research suggests that many of these strategies do not improve students' learning. Some strategies result in more learning than others and students should be trained to use these.

Two of the best strategies for learning are completing practice tests and spaced, repeated practice. Practice tests involve students taking tests or testing themselves, for example, by using vocabulary cards. Spaced, repeated practice involves learning information several times over a longer period of time as opposed to learning lots in a short period of time for an assessment. Spaced, repeated practice has been shown to result in better long-term recall of information. These two strategies benefit students of different ages and abilities and have been shown to boost students' performance across many tasks and in different educational settings.

One way to apply spaced, repeated practice is to use flashcards. Flashcards, either actual or online cards can be better than learning from lists if students set up a system of repetitions with longer periods of time between each repetition. A further advantage of this method is that, unlike lists, a flashcard system is flexible and allows learners to remove items they already know.

The keyword mnemonic strategy does appear to benefit some types of learning. An example of a mnemonic is remembering the sentence My Very Excited Mother Just Served Us Nine Pies to help remember the order of the planets - Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto. Research indicates that mnemonics can be useful for learning information but that this strategy helps short-term, rather than long-term, memory. This is because memory type strategies help learners link ideas but do not necessarily involve deep understanding, which is needed if the information is to be stored in long-term memory.

According to one piece of research there are a number of commonly used techniques that do not appear to be very helpful for learning information. These include:

Summarising: writing summaries of information and learning them

Highlighting: highlighting or underlining important sections of information and learning this

Using images: attempting to form mental images of text materials while reading or listening

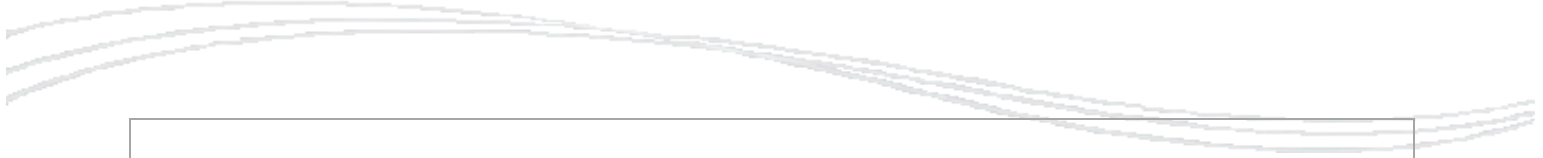
Re-reading: reading information more than once

Re-reading and highlighting are strategies that a large number of students use. However research indicates that they do not significantly improve students' learning.

There are a number of reasons why students use strategies that do not always work well. This may be because they are familiar with, or have been taught to use, these strategies. It may also be because students have not been taught different ways to learn information, or that teachers do not know that some learning strategies are better than others. In addition, teachers may concentrate on content rather than ways to learn that content, in their lessons.

470 words

Adapted from the following resource:



Dunlosky, J., Rawson, K.A., Marsh, E.J., Nathan, M.J., & Willingham, D.T. (2013).
Improving Students' Learning With Effective Learning Techniques: Promising Directions From
Cognitive and Educational Psychology. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest* Vol 14,
Issue 1, pp. 4 - 58

Text 2: Improve your memory

We use a range of things to help us store memories and recall them when they are needed, including pictures and colours, language, organisation, repetition, emotions, spatial awareness, and all five senses: sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. There are many techniques and strategies that make use of these features and that can help people to concentrate, understand and remember things they need to learn.

A mnemonic is a pattern, rhyme or picture, which is used to help remember things that may otherwise be difficult to remember. A simple mnemonic to remember a list of things is to make up a sentence where the first letter of each word is a cue for the items you have to remember. If you have to remember the order of the planets from the Sun (**M**ercury, **V**enus, **E**arth, **M**ars, **J**upiter, **S**aturn, **U**ranus, **N**eptune, **P**luto) you can make up a sentence where each word starts with the same initial letter, in the same order, for example: **M**ost **V**olcanoes **E**xpel **M**ulberry **J**am **S**andwiches **U**nder **N**ormal **P**ressure. It may seem ridiculous, but that makes the list more memorable.

People also use their senses - sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch - to take in information about the world. This can be applied to help you remember what you are studying. People often think in pictures so using pictures and visualisation can help students to remember information. This might include creating a mind map, trying to see the headings and where the different bits of information are on the page or creating a picture to illustrate the information can help learning. Using sound can also help learning. Another strategy is to use your sense of hearing by saying the information out loud, recording the information and then listening to it. Other people learn best when they are moving. For them, walking around while studying and saying the information out loud can help memory. Even the sense of smell can help memory. For example, if someone eats a lemon lolly while studying and tries to associate the taste and smell with the information, then taking a similar lolly into the exam room may be a help to remember the information.

Another method of learning information is to create a story. A story that links a number of facts is much easier to remember than a list of facts. This is because as each part of the story leads on to the next, so each fact is a cue to remember the next part. The story links the facts together. The more memorable the story, the easier it is to remember the information.

Primacy, recency and chunking are three strategies that are known to improve learning. Primacy refers to remembering information at the beginning of a list. Recency is when people remember the words from the end of the list, the words that were seen most recently. Studies have shown that most people who try to remember a list of 30 words will recall some words from the beginning of the list and some from the end, but very few from the middle. People also recall the information better if the list is divided into a number of short meaningful lists. This is known as chunking. One of the best strategies to improve learning is to divide study time into chunks of about 30 to 45 minutes with a five minute break between each chunk. Then learners should divide the things to be learned into short chunks or sections with a beginning and an ending.

585 words

Adapted from the following source:

The Open Polytechnic Kuratini Tuwhera (2017). *Improve your memory*. Retrieved from: <https://www.openpolytechnic.ac.nz/current-students/study-tips-and-techniques/study-concentrate-and-remember/improve-your-memory>