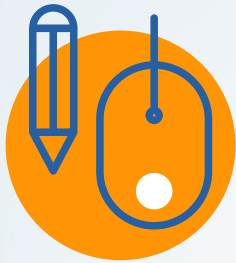


The Science of Learning Well...



Remote Learning - Teacher Tip #1: Improving **ATTENTION**

We all know that being able to pay **Attention** is essential for learning. However, it is easier said than done, especially when students are learning remotely, and don't have the guidance of their teachers to keep them focused. We can help our students to be more attentive by embedding a few key principles into our lesson design and building their awareness of how attention can be promoted. Drawing on evidence from the science of learning, we can help students:

- i) *be more ALERT during learning tasks;*
- ii) *ORIENT their focus to important detail and information; and,*
- iii) *CONTROL their attention and behaviour to make learning more efficient and effective.*



Student learning will be promoted when they are in an environment that can promote an ALERT state. Being physically comfortable, well rested, having access to all required materials, and adequate light all contribute to promoting an alert state.

Randomly ask students where they are set up for learning, and what they are doing to maximise their attention.



Movement, light, colour, sound all attract our attention. In a learning context, we need to use these sensory inputs to ORIENT student attention to what is important, and look for ways to limit those that may cause distractions. Encourage students to switch off other devices, close other tabs on their computers, and remove themselves from other environmental distractions.

See PEN Principles 1, 2 & 3 for tips on how to promote attention through the design of powerpoint, handouts etc.



To block out background noises, students could use headphones to ORIENT their attention to the lesson. When they are studying or working individually, listening to some forms of music can assist in aiding focus, increasing motivation, and making the learning experience more enjoyable. See Tip Sheet #2 for more information.

See PEN Principle #6 for more tips on reducing Multi-Tasking



Goals assist in ORIENTING attention to what needs to be addressed, and also provide targets that can help to CONTROL learning behaviour. Including Priming questions at the start of a lesson is another effective strategy for ORIENTING attention to important ideas.

Include opportunities at the start of the lesson for students to set some learning goals, and encourage this habit when learning independently.



Working memory is very limited, and impacts directly on the capacity to pay attention. For information to be consolidated and retained in a more reliable memory system, it needs time to be chunked in small amounts, revisited in multiple ways, and connected to prior knowledge.



New information can be more readily attended to when it connects with prior knowledge or real-world experiences. This also makes later recall easier.