

# Remembering & Forgetting in Everyday Life

## This activity will help you to:

- Understand concepts in cognitive psychology
- Apply your understanding to real life examples
- Improve your recall of cognitive psychology in the exam

## Examples of Remembering and Forgetting in Everyday Life

Ben is having problems with learning his Psychology studies. Every time he learns a new one he seems to stop being able to remember the ones he learned before and he often gets the details mixed together. He has the opposite problem in Maths, where he keeps trying to solve problems in the way he was taught at GCSE, much to the exasperation of his A-Level lecturers.

Geraldine is a chef. She has just started a job in a new restaurant that is much busier than the one she left. She is finding it really difficult to get the orders right as there is a constant stream of waiting staff into the kitchen yelling out orders she must fill. She has started getting orders wrong or sometimes missing them out altogether. The other kitchen staff have started calling her 'sieve-head' because her memory is so bad.

Aidan is very forgetful. He often forgets that he has marking to do and meetings to attend. He has a big diary to write all these things down in but he often forgets that he has a diary and is surprised to find it in his drawer. Although it's a very long time since he forgot to teach any of his classes, he often find that he gets held up on the way to teach because he has forgotten all sorts of things – his register, his pens, his handout, his key to the classroom door and so on. Sometimes he has to go back and collect things three or four times. His forgetfulness is particularly bad when he has to teach his AS Psychology class.

John has witnessed a crime. He was walking home on Saturday night after going to the pub with his friends. As he neared home he saw several assailants attacking a lone man. He didn't directly intervene because he was afraid of getting hurt himself, but phoned for the police, who arrived quickly but not before the attackers had run off. Now, several days later, John has gone to the police stations to give a witness statement. He's sure he had quite a firm idea of what happened at the time but his memory of events seems very sketchy now.

Rebecca is trying to learn the lines for a part in a play. The problem is, she doesn't seem to be able to get them exactly right. When she says her lines in rehearsal she often starts out OK but then starts deviating from the script. The things she says means the same as the words in the script but they are not quite the same. The director is getting annoyed with her.

Surita has a problem with exams. She always works really hard on her revision, and spends hours on end trying to learn things. She has turned one corner of her bedroom into a revision area and has her desk, books, pens and paper and all her other learning materials there, surrounded by all the posters she has made to help her remember things. Whilst she is revising she has her favourite music on (turned down low) and she has an oil burner that makes the room smell nice and helps her relax. But when she gets into the exam room at school she gets really anxious and all her hard work seems to be for nothing as she has real difficulty remembering the things she has spent so much time learning. And the more anxious she becomes the less she is able to remember.