

Strategy Scenario

Strategy: Mnemonics (Loci)

Content: Speech

Title: “Speaking Your Mind”

Time Required: 50 minutes

Target Audience: middle school, high school, college undergraduates

Goal of Activity: to provide students with a strategy to remember the contents of a persuasive speech without the use of note cards

Purpose of Script: to demonstrate that by using the method of loci, students can organize and remember their major propositions and minor propositions using a place that is familiar to them

Learning Outcome(s), Gagne’s Taxonomy: Verbal Knowledge

Learning Outcome(s) HEO Taxonomy: (memorization of concepts, preference for a cognitive strategy)

Learner Characteristics: students of any level of aptitude, middle school and above

Entry Skills: students will have already composed a persuasive essay, arguing for or against an assigned topic. They should already be familiar with the basic aspects of argumentation including propositions and evidence. The breadth and depth of their understanding is contingent on their grade level and relative academic maturity

Setting: classroom

Media: podium

Process:

- 1). The instructor returns a graded persuasive essay with feedback particular to the strength of their arguments and evidence
- 2). The instructor then announces that the students will be asked to present a five minute speech based on their compositions without using notes
- 3). Then, the instructor introduces the method of loci and models how it works using a previous student’s paper
- 4). Students are then asked to think of a familiar place, preferably their home
- 5). Next they are asked to form a mental picture of that place and then to select a room that is most familiar to them, probably their bedroom
- 6). Students are then asked to image an object in that room and think of their thesis statement
- 7). The instructor then tells the students to image another object in another

room and to think of their first minor proposition in association with that room.

8). The instructor repeats the process telling the students to envision another room and associate each subsequent minor proposition with it until they have associated all their main ideas (minor propositions) with a specific room

9). Now the instructor tells the students to practice moving from one room to the next while associating each minor proposition

10). Once this has been accomplished, the instructor asks the students to return to the room of their thesis statement. Now, the instructor asks the students to think of various objects in that room and associate each one with some point they will want to make in their introductory remarks.

11). Finally, the instructor asks the students to move to the other rooms and associate objects of each room with the minor proposition already associated with that room.

12). Students are given ten minutes in class to practice and ask questions

13). Students begin in the next class to present their speeches without using note cards

Strategy Assessment: Instructor observes students presenting their speeches while assessing how well they remember their main ideas and evidence

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References: West, C., Farmer, J., & Wolff, P. (1991). *Instructional Design: Implications from Cognitive Science*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

