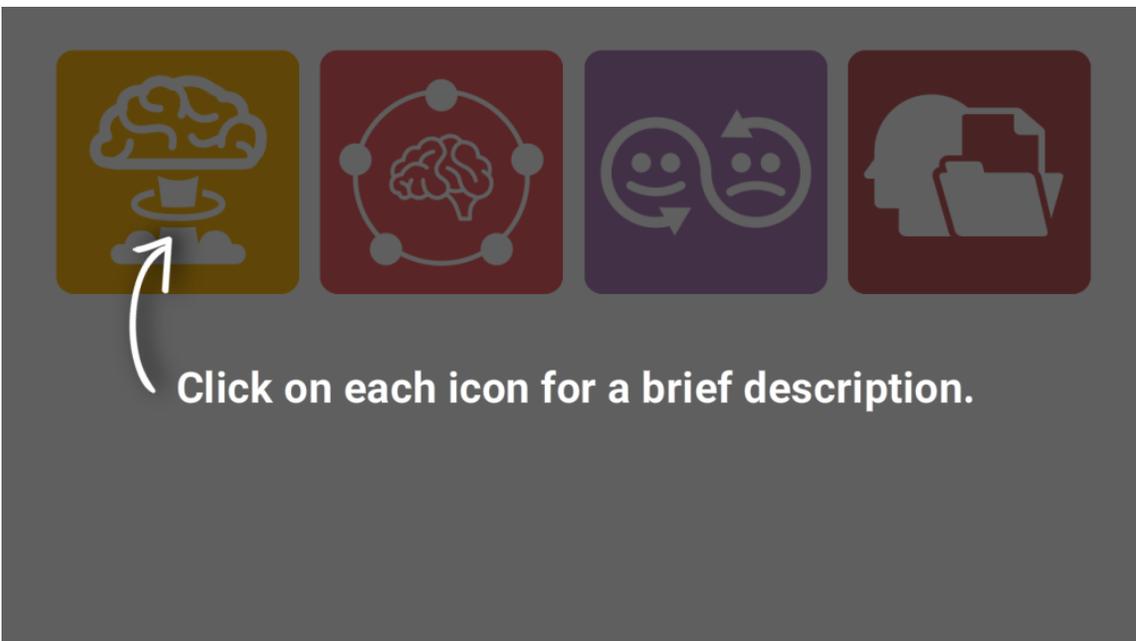


## Chapter 1: Introduction

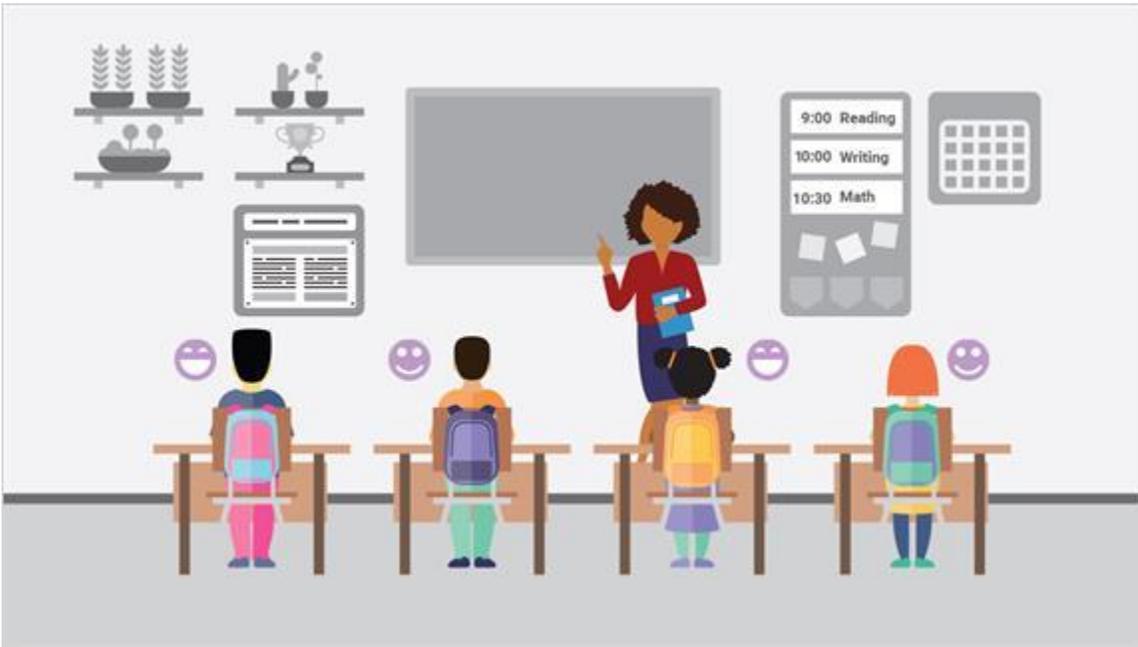
### *Bird's-Eye*



### **Transcript:**

This module is one part of a four-part series on how to teach so students remember important content and skills. Click on each icon for a brief description of the modules in this series.

## Introduction

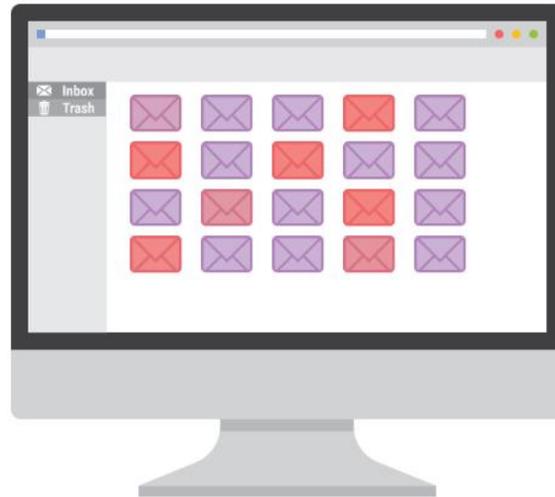


### Transcript:

People remember information that is important to them. When information is relevant to our lives and engages our emotions we are less likely to forget it. The same is true for our students. When you take the effort to make the content you teach relevant and engaging to students, they are more likely to remember it long-term.

In this module you are going to learn how engaging students' emotions can help improve their memory retention, and strategies you can use to do so.

## Working and Long-Term Memory



### Transcript:

To start off, let's get a snapshot of how memory works and why emotional experiences are more likely to be remembered.

Unfortunately, we do not have the capacity to save every piece of information that enters our brains.

Think of it this way. The human brain is like an email service. Information is constantly coming in, but some of it just lacks importance, and is sent to the junk folder to eventually be deleted.

Anything that is not viewed as personally meaningful or necessary for survival is quickly forgotten. In fact, about 98% of all incoming information is discarded (Tileston, 2004).

## Connection



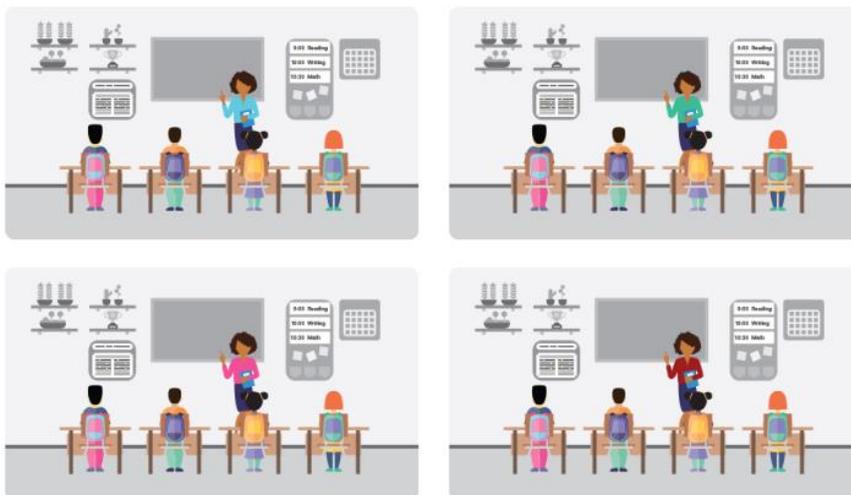
### Transcript:

An experience that causes an individual to have an emotional response is more likely to be remembered than one that doesn't (Willis, 2006). The brain views emotional responses as an indication that the given experience has value and should be remembered.

For example, a person might easily remember the details of his first kiss or the day a loved one passed away, but barely be able to remember the last time he got an oil change or ran out of dish soap.

This is just as true for the students in your classroom. Students don't easily forget learning experiences that are emotionally engaging, or the content and skills *tied* to those learning experiences.

### Test Your Working Memory



## Transcript:

Let's put your working memory to the test. Take a look at the four pictures on screen. Click on the one that correctly matches the image from earlier in the module. How sure are you of your answer?

What color shirt the animated teacher was wearing is not an important piece of information. Most likely you either could not remember correctly, or you were not as sure of your answer.

This is because our brains instinctively knew that the color of the teacher's shirt was not emotionally meaningful and quickly discarded it.

There are many ways in which you can engage your students' emotions. In this module we are going to take a look at two strategies that you can use right away.

## Chapter 2: Strategies

### *Creating a Culture of Joy*

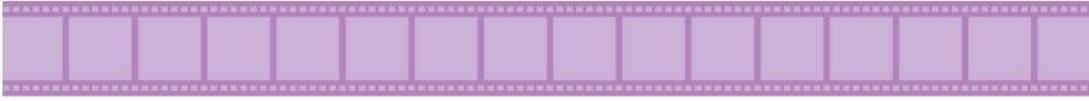


## Transcript:

Our first strategy involves creating a culture of joy in your classroom. Students feel safer and more willing to learn in a joyful environment. You can create this culture by regularly including learning games and humor in your lessons. The most important way to create a culture of joy is by showing your own excitement and enthusiasm for the content you teach. Some teachers may not be the most humorous individuals, and you can't expect to do a learning game every lesson, but you can always demonstrate love for what you teach. If you don't look excited about teaching, don't expect your students to be excited about learning (Jensen, 1998; Sprenger, 2002; Tileston, 2004; Willis, 2007).

Let's hear Mark, an experienced teacher, explain why demonstrating enthusiasm is so important. Although Mark is an ELA teacher, he's describing concepts that could transfer to any content area.

## Video



**Mark Gaspar**

### Transcript:

Kenny: Even today whenever I think about math I think about how she always made it into a puzzle. It always turned into kind of a game for me, which was very important because I couldn't just look at the things and then understand, like, and learn the concept later. I needed to understand why it worked, and so whenever she would make it into a real-world example and kind of like turn it into a game. Like, something I could win and defeat, like that really worked for me.

Natali: He was really into philosophy. I think we were learning about a philosophical... I think it was Socrates. And he was really into Socrates. And he would always give us really great life advice after class. He would tie that into every day lecture. Even though it might have had nothing to do with the, what we learning. But somehow it stuck with the students.

Nicole: I had a teacher, Mr. Guinea. And he was a psychology teacher. I was never familiar with psychology in general. So, I had no idea of what the class was even of. And he kind of introduced me to the topic and really got me interested by doing lessons that were fun. And we did a lot of experiments. And that's actually my major today. So, he kind of got me into my career, I guess, my field.

## Relevant Experiences

### Elementary Math

Students learn addition and subtraction by using coins. They practice their skills by buying small toys from the teacher and asking for the appropriate change. Students are directed to practice their new skill out in the real-world at a store.

### Secondary ELA

Students compare the book 1984 to the recent congressional debates over the government's permission to listen in on citizens' cell phone conversations. Students discuss what privacy rights are important to them as well as how much access the government should have to our lives.

» Proceed

### Transcript:

Our second strategy is creating real-world and personally relevant experiences for students to participate in. Put simply, relevance refers to the connections teachers make between content and things that already matter to students, like their personal lives and the world in which they live.

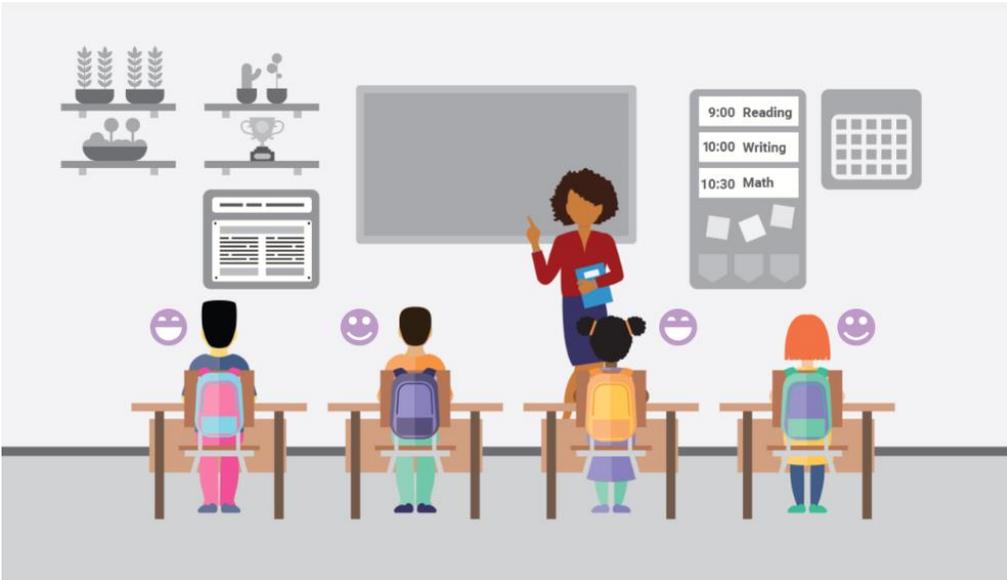
Teachers are often asked, "Why are we learning this?"

What if they answer by saying, "It's on the state standardized assessment" or "It's the next chapter of the textbook"? How likely would it be that the student asking the question has a positive emotional response to what is being taught?

When content is relevant to the life and environment of a student, he or she is more likely to make an emotional connection to that content and store it in long-term memory.

Click to see either an elementary or secondary example of creating real-world and personally relevant experiences.

## Conclusion

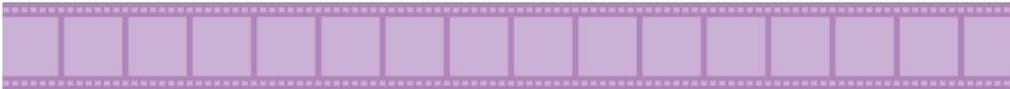


### Transcript:

Students want their learning to be meaningful and relevant to their lives. When this takes place students will feel an emotional connection to the content, understand its importance, and be more likely to remember it in the future.

To conclude, let's hear Mark give an example of how he engages the emotions of his students.

### Video



**Mark Gaspar**

### Transcript:

I do try to think how does this kind of text reflect students' current lives? So we do an anticipatory set. I'll try and just talk about maybe what are some themes. What are some similar scenarios that will occur in the text that might relate to students? They might do a class debate on some of these things. So, "Have you ever

experienced a situation where X occurred?" I'm not even talking about the book. We haven't even opened the book yet. "What would you do if you were in a scenario where this was going on? What would you guys do?" And they'll quickly discuss. We'll quickly have a class debate. And though low and behold when we're reading the text, "Mr. Gaspar this is just like the debate we had before the book." "Well my gosh, you're so right. That's exactly right."