

# The Librarian

---

## *Long-Term Memory*

### **About the Librarian:**

The Librarian helps you remember things you've seen, heard, or learned before. When something important happens, they store it safely so you can find it later. They keep all kinds of memories: facts, ideas, picture in your heads, and moments from your life. When you need to remember something, the Librarian go to look for it. They flip through their "memory files" try to find the right one. Sometimes the file is missing some bits. Sometimes the file is there, but it's hard to find. But your Librarian is always working hard to help you remember the things that matter most.

### **When your Librarian is struggling to find the right file**

If your Librarian needs some help, you might:

- Find it tricky to remember facts or ideas you've learned before
- Feel like you *almost* know something, but can't quite get it
- Forget things from lessons, even when you were listening
- Remember something one day, but not the next
- Forget instructions or what someone just told you
- Struggle to answer questions about what you've red or learned
- Take longer to remember things, even though they are "in there" somewhere
- Have trouble remembering things from your own life – like what you did yesterday, last week, or on your birthday
- Mix up what happened, or who said what
- Only remember when someone reminds you – then it all comes back to you
- Feel like your brain has too many shelves and your Librarian isn't sure where to look!

### **What you can do to help your Librarian**

- Say things out loud or write them down - it helps your Librarian make a clearer note
- Use pictures, colours or symbols to make things easier to remember
- Think about how this is similar or different to things you already know. Like "this is like when we...", "that reminds me of..." or "that's a bit like..."
- If you're stuck, ask for a clue or hint. Sometimes your Librarian just needs a little nudge
- Practice learning small bits at a time, but practice often. The more your something sees something, the easier it is to find later
- Don't panic if the answer doesn't pop up straight away – give your librarian time to search the shelves
- Remember: if it's hard to remember today, it doesn't mean it is gone forever.

Make sure the person is ready to learn these strategies. Remember, not every strategy works for everyone. When unsure, focus on what **you** can do to support the person

## What other people can do to help your Librarian

### *Giving Information*

- Repeat key information in different ways – say it, show it, write it down. Use timelines, diagrams, pictures and (most importantly) stories and real life examples
- Explain information in different ways.
- Help them make links to what they already know. For example “this is like when we...”
- Ask them to explain it in their own words.
- Check if they learned it again a bit later. Going back over it make a stronger memory
- They’ll learn best if they get information in small chunks, and you make sure they have learned it before moving on to the next step in the learning.
- They may find errorless learning helpful. When we make a mistake when learning something, we’ll sometimes remember the mistake, but not that it was wrong. Errorless learning tries to reduce this by setting tasks/questions at a level which is easy enough that they are likely to get it right (or can be supported to get it right), but is still a little bit stretching. The aim is for them to learn whilst making as few mistakes as possible.

### *Supporting recall*

- Allow time to think, and avoid putting them on the spot
- Give clues or prompts when they are stuck. They might need clues – don't expect them to recall from scratch
- Ask specific questions. E.g, rather than asking “What did you do at school today?”, try “did you do PE or Maths at school today?” – this gives more clues to help find the memory.

### *Practical Strategies*

- Make sure people know **how** they ask for help. Remember – this might not be with words
- Prioritise learning. If learning is slower and harder, let's focus more on what are the most important things for them to remember. What is 'nice to know' vs 'must know'
- Sometimes, remembering *where to find* information is easier than remembering all the information. Having well organised (and colour coded!) information written down to refer back to (notes, photo albums, handouts, diaries, etc) can be really helpful. Involve the person in creating these to support their memory, and to help them learn how/where to find information. You can also use digital files, bookmarks and apps to organise information.
- Don't assume they weren't listening if they can't remember
- Use checklists, to-do lists, visual timetables, post-its, wall charts, mind maps and prompt cards to provide reminders of key information
- Phones and laptops have a range of tools to support memory. You can use calendars, reminders, alerts, voice notes, etc to help with organisation. You can take photos of important information too. If using these, make sure the person learns how to do this effectively – when to use what tool, and how to keep information organised.
- Memory will be impacted by attention (the Spy) and Working Memory (the Helper), so using strategies to support these may also help their memory.

Make sure the person is ready to learn these strategies. Remember, not every strategy works for everyone. When unsure, focus on what **you** can do to support the person