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## MODULE 29

# Retrieval: Getting Information Out

## Module Preview

To be remembered, information that is “in there” must be retrieved with the aid of associations that serve as primers. Returning to the original context sometimes aids retrieval. While in a good or bad mood, we often retrieve memories congruent with that mood.

## Module Guide

### Introduction and Retrieval Cues

- ▶ Project: Permastore
- ▶ Project/Exercise: Retrieval Cues
- ▶ Exercise: Expertise and Retrieval Rate
- ▶ Video: Video Clip 24 of *Digital Media Archive: Psychology*, 1st ed.: *Aging and Memory*
- ▶ ActivePsych and Instructor Video Tool Kit: *Digital Media Archive*, 2nd ed.: *A Journey Into Memory*

#### 29-1. *Contrast the recall, recognition, and relearning measures of memory.*

**Recall** is a measure of memory in which the person must retrieve information learned earlier, as on a fill-in-the-blank test. **Recognition** is a measure in which a person need only identify items previously learned, as on a multiple-choice test. **Relearning** is a memory measure that assesses the amount of time saved when relearning previously learned information. Tests of recognition and relearning reveal that we remember more than we recall.

#### 29-2. *Explain how retrieval cues help us access stored memories.*

We can think of a memory as held in storage by a web of associations. Retrieval cues are bits of related information we encode while encoding a target piece of information. They become part of the web. To retrieve a specific memory, we need to identify one of the strands that leads to it, a process called **priming**. Activating retrieval cues within our web of associations aids memory. Such activation may occur without our awareness.

- ▶ Exercises: Déjà Vu in the Classroom; The Pollyanna Principle; Word-Pleasantness Experiment
- ▶ Lecture: The Déjà Vu Illusion
- ▶ Video: Video Clip 24 of *Digital Media Archive: Psychology*, 1st ed.: *Aging and Memory*

#### 29-3. *Describe the impact of environmental contexts and internal emotional states on retrieval.*

Retrieval is sometimes aided by returning to the original context in which we experienced an event or encoded a thought. It can flood our memories with retrieval cues that lead to the target memory. Sometimes, being in a context similar to one we've been in before may trick us into subconscious-

ly retrieving an earlier experience. The result is a feeling that we are reliving something that we have experienced before—a phenomenon known as *déjà vu*.

*State-dependent memory* is the tendency to recall information best in the same emotional state as when the information was learned. Memories are somewhat *mood-congruent*. While in a good or bad mood, we often retrieve memories consistent with that mood. For example, research suggests that currently depressed people recall their parents as rejecting, punitive, and guilt-promoting, whereas formerly depressed people describe their parents much as do those who have never suffered depression. Moods also prime us to interpret others' behavior in ways consistent with our emotions.