Tips for Preparing for Exams

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• Definitive list of topics is the material presented on the slides and in class!
• Learn the technical terms!
  • I don’t care whether you learn the English or the German ones
Read Text Books (Lehrbücher)!
The Ebbinghaus Curve (aka. Forgetting Curve)

Forgetting curve actually starts here as we typically remember only about 75% at the end of a lecture – so we have less to remember.

Use the “Spacing Effect” (Beat the Ebbinghaus Curve)

Notice how less is forgotten after each review!
Read on Paper (not on Screen!)

[Delgado et al.: Don’t throw away your printed books: A meta-analysis on the effects of reading media on reading comprehension, 2018]
Use the Right Tool for the Right Task!

Pen tablet
Digital paper
Pen & paper

Use the Right Tool for the Right Task!

Performance wrt. speed

Time to solve (sec)

First trial

Average

Second trial

Performance wrt. errors

Percent correct solution
Handwriting is Brain-Writing

Procedure:
1. All students attended the same lecture and were asked to take notes
2. After a week, students took a test on the material
The test asked about factual knowledge as well as conceptual understanding.
- "Laptop" = typed note-taking on laptop
- "Longhand" = handwritten note-taking on paper
- "Study" = students could study their notes before the test
- "No-study" = no opportunity to study their notes

Replication Study

Similar design: lecture, immediate test afterwards, and finally a test after 2 days. Results show the performance in the final test → no significant "winner"

Get Enough Sleep (≥8h on a Regular Basis)

[Matt Walker: Why We Sleep - Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams. Scribner, 2018]
Dreams Come to Prepared Minds