Your notes

GCSE Psychology: revision notes

Processes and types of memory

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The three processes of memory

- **Encoding**: changing information into a form that can be stored. Information can be encoded acoustically (by sound), visually (by image) or semantically (by meaning).
- **Storage**: keeping information in memory over time.
- **Retrieval**: getting stored information back out of memory when needed.

Types of long-term memory

- **Episodic memory**: memories of personal events, such as your last birthday. They are linked to a time and place.
- **Semantic memory**: knowledge and facts, such as knowing that Paris is the capital of France.
- **Procedural memory**: memories of how to do things, such as riding a bike. They are often hard to explain in words.

Why it matters

- Forgetting can happen at any stage: information may not be encoded, may fade from **storage**, or may fail to be retrieved.
- Revising using meaning (**semantic encoding**), such as explaining ideas in your own words, helps information last longer.

Key terms

Encoding	Changing information into a form that can be stored.
Storage	Keeping information in memory over time.
Retrieval	Getting information back out of memory.
Episodic memory	Memory of personal events.
Semantic memory	Memory of knowledge and facts.

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Procedural memory	Memory of how to do things.
Acoustic encoding	Storing information by its sound.
Semantic encoding	Storing information by its meaning.

Quick questions

Cover the answers and test yourself: remembering is what makes it stick.

1. What is encoding?
2. What is retrieval?
3. Which type of memory is remembering your last birthday?
4. Which type of memory is knowing the capital of France?
5. Which type of memory is knowing how to ride a bike?
6. What is semantic encoding?
7. What is acoustic encoding?
8. What is storage?

Answers

1. Changing information into a form that can be stored
2. Getting stored information back out of memory
3. Episodic memory
4. Semantic memory
5. Procedural memory
6. Storing information by its meaning
7. Storing information by its sound
8. Keeping information in memory over time

What to do next

Practise 10 questions on this topic

Try 4 exam questions, with mark schemes

Read the lesson, one step at a time

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