Working Memory

Working memory involves students being able to hold onto information they have been given for a short period of time, and use it in some other way. Examples of everyday activities that use working memory include:

Following directions such as, ’When you pass the shops, turn left and then go to the roundabout and turn right.’ Multiplying or adding up numbers mentally in your head, reading a recipe and remembering to measure and combine the right ingredients, remembering a phone number and then dialling it or remembering why you walked into a room!

**For kids, working memory is important for following instructions in the classroom, concentrating on what the teacher is saying, paying attention in class, focussing during activities and finishing activities independently. Working memory is also very important for learning in Literacy and Maths.**

There are many things you can do at home to help support your child’s and your own working memory, including targeted games and iPad applications.

The simplest games and activities to play include:

* Dot to dot
* Mazes
* Word searches/sleuths
* Jigsaw puzzles
* Block or Lego building (where they follow instructions or copy a picture to construct something)
* Uno, snap, concentration, card games
* Any board game that requires strategizing, including Battleship, Connect 4, Checkers or Chess

There is also research to support the use of certain video games and iPad applications in the strengthening of working memory. Mario Kart Wii and new Super Mario Bros both require players to memorise track layouts to find bonuses and constantly recall locations of items in order to beat each level. These games exercise your working memory and provide a fun way to spend time with your kids.

To really improve working memory there are some guidelines that need to be followed:

* **Repetition.** You’ll need to play the games repeatedly to see any improvement or growth.
* **Duration.** You need to practice your memory skills regularly
* **Challenge yourself.**  By playing increasingly challenging games, you’ll constantly be achieving improvement in Working Memory.
* **Compete.**  Sometimes the best way to get better at something is to want to beat someone else at it!

**If you are able to, please also download the following app from the iTunes App Store on your iPhone, iPod or iPad, and play it with your child as often as possible. This is a fun way to develop working memory and visual processing.**

**Monster Hunt The Memory Game (Free)**

