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Internationally-recognized reading expert Dr. Russell Stauffer is the originator of the best-selling Speed Learning system, a speed reading and comprehension training program used by top achievers in major government agencies and over 400 of the Fortune 500 companies. An Emeritus Professor at the University of Delaware, Dr. Stauffer's innovative research and numerous contributions to the field of reading have earned him international recognition in the Reading Hall of Fame. Smart Reading is based on over 30 years of Stauffer's research into the reading, comprehension and memory skills used by fast and effective readers. As always, his emphasis is on comprehension because "It doesn't do you any good to read faster, if you can't remember what you've read."

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Smart Reading

Welcome to Smart Reading, a 7-step process that doubles your reading efficiency. With Smart Reading, you'll absorb and remember more of everything you read—in half the time you spend now. Start by listening to the tapes. As you learn each new skill, review the summary in this guidebook. Then do the related Exercise before beginning the next skill.

Peak Performance Tips

1. Set clear, personal goals

Every top athlete knows that goals are the first step to success. Goals have been proven to boost performance in every area of our lives, from sports and business to meditation and healing. Learning is no exception. When you set clear, personal goals for reading—and use the 7 Smart Steps—you can increase your speed and comprehension by up to 400%. Written goals are more effective than goals that exist only in your mind, so take a moment to put your goals on paper.

Think about why you bought this program. Would you like to double or triple your reading speed? Do you want to eliminate the piles of unread papers and magazines cluttering your desk? Or maybe you'd like to read several new books a month, master a new subject or learn new job skills? Think back for a moment. What were the challenges in your life that made you pick up this course to begin with the best goal for you will be the solution to those challenges.

My Achievement Goal:

Second, you'll need goals for your training time and practice sessions. It doesn't have to be a long stretch of time, as long as it's regular. How about half an hour after dinner each weeknight? Or maybe 2 hours every Saturday? Choose times that work for you. Even 20 minutes a day will give you great results, if you stick with it. You probably spend a lot more than 20 minutes a day reading anyway, so practice your new skills on the things you have to read, as well as the things you want to read.

My Time Commitment:

Once you've decided on your schedule, take a minute to write it in your day planner, too, or put it on a card in your wallet, on your desk, or near the bathroom mirror. Now, select your reading list. What new information would you like to know? Which books have you been meaning to get to? What intriguing new magazines or trade journals would you like to read? Would you like to keep up with the latest news or become an expert in a particular subject? According to the late Earl Nightingale—a leading speaker, broadcaster, and self-made millionaire—if you spend just one hour a day studying a new subject, you'll be a leading expert in the field within five years. So list the books, subjects, trade journals, newspapers or other publications you'd like to add to your personal knowledge bank.

My Smart Reading List:

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2. Create a supportive external environment

- Good lighting
- Comfortable desk or chair
- Quiet environment
- Baroque chamber music by Mozart, Bach, Vivaldi

3. Create a supportive internal environment

- Slow deep breaths; relaxed body; active, playful mind
- Hungry or thirsty? A light protein snack or fruit
- Break for exercise or movement every 15 minutes

4. Break through resistance with Creative Visualization.

This technique will help you re-program almost any type of resistance, from boredom and mind-wandering to procrastination or performance blocks. Picture your desired outcome—imagine using the new skill or knowledge. See the picture in great detail. Use all 5 senses and add lots of action, color, exaggeration and humor. Take a one-minute Creative Visualization break every time your mind starts to wander to balance left-brain and right-brain activity.

5. Check in with your own priorities

Each time you read, you'll have a slightly different focus, but you'll always want to ask yourself these two questions:

- "What are my priorities now?"
- "What challenges am I facing?"

Stay focused on your own priorities as you read.

Smart Step #1 — Surveying

Surveying is your key to managing information overload. The 8-step process helps you quickly sift through massive amounts of information and take in only what is useful to YOU. Your goal, as you take each step, is to answer the questions, "Should I read this?" and "Where is the useful information?"

The 8 Survey Steps

1. Read title, subtitle and jacket summary.
2. Identify author or source, and date of publication or copyright.
3. Skim the Table of Contents.
4. Examine Index for relevant references.
5. Read the Preface, Forward, Introduction and Conclusions.
6. Review pictures, captions, charts, maps, graphics, bold headings, summaries, sidebars, exercises and study questions.
7. Read a paragraph to judge writing style.
8. Overall picture. Review what you've learned and make your decision:
"To read or not to read."

Exercise #1

Surveying Books:

Gather 2 or 3 nonfiction books that relate to your work or hobby. Set a goal to Survey each book in 10 minutes or less using the guidelines below. At the end of each step, eliminate any book that doesn't seem worth reading.

1. Read the title, subtitle and any summaries on the back cover or book jacket. Is the content a good match for your priorities or challenges?
2. Determine the author(s) or source. Are they credible? Find the copyright date. Is it current enough?
3. Read the Table of Contents. Note the emphasis and sequence of information. Look for summaries. Turn to one and check the completeness and organization.
4. Examine the Index. Notice which listings have the most references. Are there listings for your priorities?
5. Read the Preface, Foreword, Introduction and Conclusion. Identify the author's attitudes and assumptions about the subject and the reader.
6. Review pictures, captions, charts, maps, graphics, bold headings, summaries,

sidebars, exercises and study questions. Note which sections have information that relates to your priorities.

7. Read a random paragraph or two to judge the writing style. Is it well written? Easy to understand? Are there enough details? What's the balance of fact and opinion? Does the author "speak your language?"
8. Review what you've learned, reading this book be a good use of your time?

Surveying Magazines or Newspapers:

Gather a stack of newspapers, magazines or trade journals. Set a goal for surveying each publication in 3 to 5 minutes or less. (Remember, you're not reading yet; you're just deciding whether or not the articles are worth reading.)

1. Pick one publication. Survey the headlines to see if any relate to your current interests.
2. Check the publication date. Is the information current?
3. If it's a newspaper, circle only those articles of interest. If it's a magazine, check the table of contents to see if the articles are summarized. Read the summaries and circle only the articles you want to know more about.
4. Find one of the articles you circled. Do you know anything about the author? Are his or her credentials given? Is the information likely to be valid or biased?
5. Look for a brief introduction, summary or conclusion. Does it still look interesting?
6. Next, look at the pictures, charts, graphics, maps, bold headings, summaries, sidebars, or suggested exercises at the end. Do you need to read anything more?
7. Then read a paragraph or two. Not just the first paragraph. Read a middle paragraph. Do you like the writing style? Is the author talking to you?
8. Now, take one last look before diving in. Ask yourself, "Is reading this article a good use of my time?" If so, tear it out and put it in your Smart Reading

file for practicing the next steps. Or, if you can't wait, read it as quickly as you can and then move on to the next article.

Surveying organizes the initial facts and sets up clear categories in your mind about the author, the subject, and how the subject relates to you and your needs. When you've finished your Survey and start to read, this mental filing system naturally guides your mind to sort and store the related information in the most effective way.

Smart Tip: Managing Information Overload

You can stay on top of your daily paper deluge by setting aside 10 minutes at the end of every work day to Survey each new trade journal, report or memo that's landed on your desk. Save only the material that's really worth reading, the rest goes in the trash. For journals or newspapers, rip out the worthwhile articles and put them in a Smart Reading file. Keep the file with you, so you can catch up on your reading whenever you have a spare moment, waiting in line or between appointments. If you finish your daily paper invasion in less than 10 minutes, use the extra time to wipe out that stack of materials that's been gathering dust in the corner.

Smart Step #2 — Setting Purpose Questions

Purpose Questions help you to focus on the data that you need, and ignore what you don't need. When you know what you're looking for, you can sort through material much faster. Your eyes naturally lead you to the answers, bypassing extraneous data along the way. Besides helping you read faster, questions also keep your mind focused on the material so it doesn't wander off-track.

The six key questions used by journalists will give you all the information you need:

What—look for key words relating to the main subject

Who—look for capitalized names

Where—look for locations, cities, countries

When—look for times, days, dates

How—may include a list or series of answers

Why—often includes several related answers

The first four questions are all looking for specific facts. Either the answers exist in the material, or they don't. If they do, they'll be right on the surface. You won't need to dig.

How and Why questions are looking for more detail. There may be several related answers to each question, or you may need to analyze the facts and opinions to get accurate data. With How and Why questions, you'll use a slower, more thorough reading approach.

Exercise #2

Tools: Paper, pencil and a current newspaper. Time: About 30 minutes

1. Take a moment to set up a good learning environment. Then ask yourself the two focusing questions:
"What are my current priorities?" "What challenges am I facing now?"
2. Skim through one or two sections of the paper to find five articles you want to read.
3. Do a quick survey of the first article. You may want to use the guidelines on pages 7 and 8 to stay focused.
4. Write up to five Purpose Questions for the article. What do you want to learn from the material? Do you want to know Who is involved, and When or Where the events took place? Formulate How and Why questions that relate to the action in the article and your own priorities.
5. Read the article as fast as you can, looking only for answers to the questions you wrote. Skip unrelated facts. Do not read every word. You'll be breaking a deeply ingrained habit, so be persistent.
6. Complete steps 3 through 5 for the other four articles.
7. Repeat this exercise twice in the next two days.

Smart Step #3 — Speculating

Speculating is a proven memory technique that actively engages your brain and eliminates mind wandering. After you determine your purpose questions, you do a quick mental inventory of what you already know about the subject. Then, you either take an educated guess at the answer, or you make one up. If you're already familiar with the subject, Speculating reinforces your previous knowledge. If you're not, your wild and outrageous guess will create a memorable link to the new information.

Exercise #3

Tools: Paper, pen and a current newspaper or magazine.

1. Survey the source to find five articles to read.
2. Write up to 5 purpose questions for the first article.
3. Speculate on the answers to your questions. Write down your speculated answers.
4. Read the article as fast as you can, looking only for answers to the questions you wrote.
5. Evaluate the writer's answers against your own. Did the data reinforce your knowledge? Did you learn anything new? Link the correct answers to your Speculations.
6. Complete steps 2 through 5 for the other four articles.
7. Repeat this exercise twice in the next two days.

Smart Step #4 — Skim Reading

When the goal of reading is to collect facts, and you don't have to interpret or analyze the data, then Skim Reading will help you quickly gather the information you need.

Looking for Landmarks. Generally, Skim Reading is used to answer What, Who, When and Where questions. As your eyes whiz down the page, the words, ideas or

phrases that relate to your questions act as landmarks. When you see a landmark, you stop and let the facts register. Once the landmark information is absorbed, you go back to the faster skimming pace.

The Chew and Swallow technique. Whenever you find a landmark, stop. Repeat the facts to yourself, out loud if possible. If the landmark points to a descriptive answer, rephrase the explanation in your own words. You may want to write the facts down, underline them, or add a post-it note. Stop and chew the facts for a moment, and put them in your own words, before you move on.

Paragraph Reading. Most writers organize their material so that the first sentence of a paragraph indicates what's inside the box. However, sometimes an author will write with topic sentences on the second line or at the end of the paragraphs. Authors usually follow a consistent pattern. If you know where to look, you can rely on the topic sentences of paragraphs to guide your eyes as you skim.

When you skim, let your eyes float quickly down the page scanning for unusual words, numbered items, and signal words such as "additionally," "furthermore" and "also." These words suggest that you'll find added information on the topic. Other signal words indicate a new idea is about to be presented, such as "however," "yet," "but" and "on the other hand."

Exercise #4

1. Find a newspaper or magazine. Create a comfortable learning environment, and set a time goal for finishing the reading.
2. Remembering your personal priorities and challenges, select 4 or 5 articles you want to read.
3. Survey each article, then define your purpose questions. Speculate on the answers you think the writer will give.
4. Skim read to find your answers. Use Paragraph Reading if it's effective. Otherwise, look for Landmarks. When you find one, stop to Chew and

Swallow. Don't slow down. Either Skim quickly, or stop to absorb the new facts.

5. Practice these Skimming techniques on everything you read for the next three days. If you need to spend more time with the information, consciously choose to slow down for a moment, then go back to the faster pace. Practice is the key to creating your new habits.

Smart Step #5— Study Reading

Sometimes you need to examine and evaluate what you read, particularly when answering How and Why questions. You'll want to slow down, digest the facts, decipher the meaning, and compare it to what you think and feel before you decide to agree with the author or not. Study Reading taps into your intellect to enhance your conceptual learning.

There are four main steps to Study Reading:

1. Consider the Source
2. Collect the Data
3. Conduct an Analysis
4. Decide

Consider the Source: Who is the author? What are the author's credentials? How recent, reliable, and complete are the author's competencies? Based on background, what viewpoints or biases might the author have?

Collect the Data: Survey, set purpose questions, and speculate your answers. Be sure to carefully plot your How and Why questions. Then, skim the material for the facts you need and the landmarks that signal the author is offering explanations to your How and Why questions. When you see these signals, slow down and take more time. Be sure to sort out facts from opinions.

Conduct an Analysis: Examine the author's viewpoint. Are the assumptions sound? Are the conclusions accurate? Ask yourself: What does the author want me to think?

Is the author playing on my emotions? If so, can I cut through to the facts? What's missing? Is any information left out? If I know the author omitted some facts, what else might have been omitted? Always ask if statements are true. Look for proof.

Decide: Compare the information with what you already know so you can decide what you want to accept, and what you can reject. Is there enough evidence to convince you to change your opinion? Is the author asking you to change your mind, or to just look at what you know from a broader perspective? Can you take the information from the author, combine it with what you already know and compose some new ideas you hadn't thought of before? Would you feel comfortable changing your behavior based on the evidence presented?

Study Reading helps you to formulate your own conclusions, so you'll be more confident when you make decisions, solve problems, and communicate your ideas to others.

Exercise #5

Tools: Paper, pencil and the opinion page of a newspaper.

1. Select one article to read. Relax with 3 deep breaths.
2. Survey the article and write up to five purpose questions: What do you want to learn from the article? What type of evidence and/or explanation do you need? Formulate How and Why questions that relate to the opinion presented.
3. Speculate on the answers to your questions. Write down your speculations and your own opinions.
4. Read the article as fast as you can, looking for your answers. Evaluate how the writer built his argument. Can you follow the logic? Are the examples given relevant and complete, or are they taken out of context with no foundation? What is the author's real crusade? Does she back up her opinions by quoting other people or sources? Are these sources credible? Does he report the results of related research? Is the research sample representative?

Is it up-to-date?

5. Evaluate the writer's answers against your own. Did the author reinforce your knowledge? Did you learn anything? Were you persuaded to change or alter your view? If not, ask yourself why the author failed to persuade you. Cite your own reasons and evidence.
6. Study read two more opinion pieces.
7. Schedule a two-hour session to study read 2 or 3 chapters in a non-fiction book using these guidelines.

You can practice the skills of study reading throughout the week while listening as well as reading. Critically analyze the speakers you hear on television or radio. Use your skills when reading reports. The more you practice, the more you'll strengthen your analytical skills.

Smart Step #6 — Summarizing & Reviewing

By Summarizing the main points you want to remember when you read, and reviewing the material later, you can increase your retention of critical information by 90%.

Summarize — Determine the writer's overall theme and main idea for each section. State each idea in your own words in a short sentence. Condense the answers to your purpose questions. When you're finished, you will have a concise outline of the material.

Review — Base your review on your natural learning style. Research shows that there are 3 basic learning styles: auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. Although most of us take in information using all 3 channels, we each have a preferred mode of learning. Reading may be a visual activity, but you can design review sessions to match your natural style.

Identify your preferred learning style

Auditory Learners take in information by listening. They soak up words. They also ask a lot of questions. They need to hear all the angles before they decide. They love details. They tend to be good text readers, absorbing manuals from front to back. They "hear" the authors talking to them when they read.

Visual Learners take in information through sight. They get restless when others talk unless they have pictures and demonstrations to refer to. In articles and books, they'll skip the text and go directly to the diagrams. If they're learning a hands-on skill, they want to see it performed. They want to be shown, not told what to do. They may or may not enjoy reading; however, they take good notes to refer to later.

Kinesthetic Learners learn by doing. They have to apply what they hear or read immediately to retain the information. They prefer trial runs, jumping in feet first without practice. Making errors is part of the learning process. The sooner they're allowed to do something, the faster they'll learn. They like instruction broken into steps, case studies, simulations, and "hands-on" homework they can apply right away.

Reviewing tips for each learning style

Auditory learners: Tape record your summary of the main points and answers to your questions. Then listen to the tape while you commute to work, or when you're exercising or doing chores around the house. Say the information out loud along with the tape. Teach the main points to someone else so you can hear yourself using the information. Set the information to a tune and sing it.

Visual learners: Put your notes where you'll see them at least once a day for the next three weeks. Place them on your desk near the phone, on the refrigerator or bathroom mirror, or on the dashboard of your car so you can look at them when you're stopped at a red light. If you've read information that you can use, apply what you've learned as soon as possible.

Kinesthetic learners: Write down the main points in outline form. Copy it several times. If no one is in the room with you, or if you don't care what people think of you while you're driving, "perform" the information. Pretend you're an actor. Deliver a moving monologue. Use big gestures. Then apply what you've learned as soon as possible.

Of course, you don't have to go to these extremes for everything you read. But when the material is complex, and you know the information is valuable, then you'll want to summarize and review the information to guarantee long-term memory of the details.

Exercise #6

Tools: Paper, pencil and a trade journal or book that has information you want to remember.

1. Survey using the 8 steps, set purpose questions, speculate answers, skim read as much as possible, and study read when you need to analyze the information.
2. Write down the main ideas as you read. Summarize, in your own words, the answers to your purpose questions. Keep your answers brief. After you read, test yourself by answering your own questions and making decisions about how you will use what you've read.
3. Based on your learning style, prepare a way to review the information you want to remember. If you're visual, write notes to put in strategic places. If you're auditory, read your notes into a tape recorder. If you're kinesthetic, rewrite your notes or plan time to act out the material.
4. Space your review sessions throughout the next week. The 3-2-1 Review Schedule works best. Review the material three times the first day, twice on the second day, and once a day for the rest of the week.
5. Depending on your needs, you may want to add an extra review session each week for the next 3 weeks, until you know that the knowledge is totally accessible.

Continue practicing the first six Smart Steps as you read for the next three weeks. Once your new skills feel comfortable, you can move on to the last skill—pacing.

Smart Step #7 — Pacing

Up until now, you've been practicing mental activities. Now you're going to shift to the physical skills—how to move your eyes rapidly down a page, absorbing entire phrases and ideas with a single glance. Like exercise, in order to learn this skill, you'll have to push yourself beyond the comfort zone to make progress. **At first, your comprehension and memory will decrease.** This can be very frustrating. Keep with it. With practice and patience, you'll train your eyes and brain to work together in an entirely new way. Our research shows that once you break the word-by-word habit, your comprehension will not only return, it will far exceed your current performance.

The Method: When you pace, you direct your eyes to take in groups of words instead of single words. Pacing trains your peripheral vision to take in the scene as well as the subject of the picture. Here's how it works. When you look at the following phrase, focus your eyes only on the middle word under the dot: • little shop of horrors

Your eye should drop on the word "shop." Yet your peripheral vision caught both the words "little" and "horrors." Your eyes stopped on one word, but your brain took in three words. Each time your eyes stop, it takes one quarter of a second. If you stop on every word, you can never read faster than 4 words per second (240 word per minute.) By training your peripheral vision, you can triple that speed.

Exercise #7

The Dot Technique: Find an article in a magazine. Using a pencil or pen, place a dot over each word in a paragraph. Read it. Now, on the next paragraph, place a dot over every other word. Practice reading two or three paragraphs by only reading the words

under the dots while taking in the surrounding words with your peripheral vision. Once you feel comfortable, take the next step by placing dots over every third or fourth word.

As you get used to reading word groups, place your dots mainly in the center portion of the page (as shown below, between the 2 lines). Focusing on the middle portion boosts your speed because your eyes don't have to travel as far. You won't be learning any less, though, because your peripheral vision will fill in the gaps. The best way to train your peripheral vision is in short, frequent sessions. Practice Pacing for 5 to 10 minutes several times this week.

He was an old man who fished alone in a skiff in the Gulf Stream and he had gone eighty-four days now without taking a fish. In the first forty days a boy had been with him. But after forty days without a fish, the boy's parents had told him that the old man was now definitely and finally *salao*, which is the worst form of unlucky, and the boy had gone at their orders in another boat which caught three good fish the first week.

Using a Pacing Guide: Now that you're familiar with the dot technique, you won't need the dots anymore. Just move your eyes in a similar pattern. A Pacing Guide will help you to keep your eyes moving quickly and smoothly down the printed page. You can use your hand, an index card or a piece of paper. Place the guide at the top of the page you're reading and drop it smoothly down the page, line by line. Push your eyes to move as fast as the guide—they tend to slow down on their own. Remember that comprehension is secondary now. If you're getting all the meaning, you're going too slowly. Your mission is to force your eyes to move so quickly that your peripheral vision is forced to kick in.

Exercise #8

Tools: Pencil, pacing guide, a timer to measure 15- and 10-second intervals, and a simple, short fiction book.

1. Set up a comfortable reading environment. Do a quick survey of the book. Set 3 to 5 purpose questions about the characters and events, and speculate the answers.
2. Set a goal of pacing each page in 15 seconds. Using your pacing guide, sweep your eyes quickly down the page following a zigzag pattern as you look for key words and landmarks. When you reach the bottom of the page, stop and write down anything you remember. At first it will probably be only 1 or 2 words.
3. Continue to pace one page at a time, stopping to write at the end of each. Then try two pages before writing what you remember. Build to five pages, then ten pages at a time. Concentrate on pushing yourself as fast as your eyes can move. Your main purpose is rapid eye movement. Comprehension is secondary.
4. When you reach the end of the first chapter, look over your notes. Ask a couple of new questions to help fill in the gaps of your understanding. Speculate, and skim back over the chapter looking only for the answers to your questions. Write a quick summary of the facts.
5. Once you feel ready, read a whole chapter at 15 seconds per page, stopping only when you find a useful nugget to "chew and swallow." At the end of the chapter, stop and write down what you remember. Again, don't worry about comprehension. Focus on expanding your peripheral vision so you can absorb groups of words at a glance.
6. When you're somewhat comfortable with 15 seconds per page, stretch yourself to 10 seconds. Continue using the same process. After you've paced each chapter, stop to review your notes. If you need more facts, set specific purpose

questions, speculate and skim back over the material. Summarize your findings.

7. When you reach the end of the book, review your summaries of each chapter. Are you satisfied with your knowledge, or do you want to know more? Set additional purpose questions, if necessary, speculate, skim for answers and then summarize the entire book.

Pacing Fiction Books

Set aside an evening to pace a more complicated fiction book. Practice is important for the next 2 to 3 weeks to keep your peripheral vision active when you read.

1. Set up a comfortable learning environment, and spend a moment focusing on your own interests and priorities.
2. Survey the book noting the main characters and the plot as mentioned in summaries, introductions and chapter headings.
3. Create questions and speculate on what will happen to the characters, what conflicts they'll need to overcome and what success you think they'll have.
4. Use pacing and skimming to move through the material as fast as you can. Aim for 10 to 15 seconds per page. Look for landmarks and stop to "chew and swallow" new bits of information when you find them. Use underlining, notes in the margin or post-it notes to mark the key facts.
5. Pause to summarize at the end of each chapter and whenever a conflict is resolved. Then speculate what will happen next, before pacing the next chapter.
6. At the end of the book, review your chapter notes to see if there are any gaps in your understanding. Set questions, speculate and skim for the answers. Then summarize the story and evaluate what you received from the book. What message did it have for you?

Pacing Non-Fiction Books

Now that you've mastered pacing, in less than 2 hours you should be able to gather all the vital information from a non-fiction book. Then, simply add a few 5-minute review sessions using the 3-2-1 Review Schedule to store the knowledge efficiently in your brain for long-term recall.

1. First, ask yourself, "Why am I reading this book?" How does it relate to your current priorities and goals?
2. Do a quick survey, using all of the 8 steps that apply.
3. Set purpose questions, speculate answers, then skim and study read. Use pacing and paragraph reading wherever possible. Skip any sections that are not relevant. Stop to "chew and swallow" any useful bits of information. Underline or take notes.
4. Summarize the answers to your purpose questions in your own words. Keep your answers brief. Set new questions if you want more information, then skim to find the answers.
5. When you've finished the book, test yourself by answering your questions. Summarize your findings and decide how you will use what you've read.
6. Finally, based on your learning style (auditory, visual or kinesthetic), prepare a way to store the information in your long-term memory using the 3-2-1 Review Schedule. Short sessions and spaced repetition work best. Then find ways to use your new knowledge, or share it with others, to lock it firmly into your memory.



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