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All Things Remembered

Imagine possessing the ability to recall the most trifling events, details, and dates of your life with near perfect accuracy. Let's say, for example, you could remember that June 15th, 1992 fell on a Monday, and you ate a hamburger with extra cheese and onions for dinner as you watched a rerun of Seinfeld. For Brad Williams, this isn't a speculative what if, but rather a feat of which he has always been capable.

There have been a number of other documented memory marvels in the past. These people could memorize random letters or numbers with ease, or recall book passages and short stories word for word. Williams is different. He doesn't dredge useless information to the surface, but rather information relevant to his past. Once corroborated with scrapbooks and diaries, his memory has proven to be nearly flawless.

"I've always been this way," he said. In fact, as a child, he thought everyone possessed the same ability. Although the phenomenon has always been a source of entertainment to his family, one expert believes Williams may be one of the best memories in the world. The doctor is presently studying Williams in the hopes of achieving a better understanding of how memory functions.

Another woman has also been found with an almost identical talent, and has joined the same study. She calls her ability a burden and not a gift, though. Whenever she hears a date, a flash of memories run through her mind. It's nonstop and exhausting.

Both Williams and the woman seem to remember better the information they find of interest. This proves an essential element in their abilities, and some researchers have concluded that many others may similarly be capable of the same skills. Since the study began, a third individual has been discovered with similar promise.

Teacher's Notes:

* Underlined words in red typeface are the recommended vocabulary for this lesson.
WARM-UPS

Select one or all of the following warm-up activities.

1: Define: What does “photographic memory” mean? Can you use it in a sentence? Can you give examples?

2: Brainstorm: Brainstorm with a partner(s) words and ideas associated with “memory” for 2 minutes. Spend another 5 minutes or less discussing the words and ideas together.

3: Title: Speculate and/or discuss the contents of today’s article from its title: “All Things Remembered.”

4: Do you agree or disagree? Why?

   a. I have an excellent memory.
   b. I would want to remember every detail of my life.
   c. Names, dates, and details are always very important to remember.
   d. The brain and how it works will never be completely understood.
   e. Someday everyone will have great memories and will be able to remember all kinds of information.

5: Rank It!: Which memories are the most important? Rank the choices in order, and support your decisions!

   a. your wedding day
   b. the day your child was born
   c. your first kiss
   d. your first day of school
   e. the day one of your parents died
VOCABULARY

Select one of the following vocabulary acquisition activities.

1: Vocabulary match: Individually or in pairs/groups, match the words in column A (from the article) with the best choice in column B.

```
a. trifle          q. sensation
b. speculate       r. record

c. feat            s. unimportant thing
d. document        t. work

e. dredge          u. perfect
f. corroborate     v. potential

g. flawless        w. guess
h. phenomenon      x. achievement
i. function        y. confirm
j. promise         z. bring up
```

2: Fill in the Blanks: Fill in the blank with the correct word.

```
functions           speculative          promise          documented          flawless
dredge              phenomenon          corroborated      trifling             feat

a. Imagine possessing the ability to recall the most ( ______ ) events, details, and dates of your life.
b. For Brad Williams, this isn't a ( ______ ) what if.
c. It's a ( ______ ) of which Williams has always been capable.
d. There have been a number of other ( ______ ) memory marvels in the past.
e. He doesn't ( ______ ) useless information to the surface, but rather information relevant to his past.
f. Scrapbooks and diaries have ( ______ ) the information he remembers.
g. His memory has proven to be nearly ( ______ ).
h. The ( ______ ) has always been a source of entertainment to his family.
i. The doctor is presently studying Williams to achieve a better understanding of how memory ( ______ ).
j. Since the study began, a third individual has been discovered with similar ( ______ ).
```

3: Define: Define each word, correctly pronounce it, explain the meaning and/or usage, and offer an example sentence to the class.

```
a. trifle          c. feat          e. dredge          g. flawless          i. function
b. speculate       d. document      f. corroborate     h. phenomenon      j. promise
```
**WORD RECOGNITION**

1: Word Search: Find the target words (in bold). Time yourself, and see how many words you can find in three minutes. In five minutes. In ten minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>functions</th>
<th>speculative</th>
<th>promise</th>
<th>documented</th>
<th>flawless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dredge</td>
<td>phenomenon</td>
<td>corroborated</td>
<td>triling</td>
<td>feat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

```
G D D J F E B I D F U U F E I
T N B E G E S L U V D E A V P
D C I D T W A N C E X S E I H
E Q E L C A C T T F P I T T E
P R O Z F T R A V B M M U A N
D H Z Z I R O T X X O T L O
E S E O S O R Z B T N R R U M
Z F N N B Y M T V O H P C C O
X S E O O D R E G E R T N E N
R U R C A M T B C X O R S P O
G O J R C K E J R I X I O S N
C M A W P L Z N Q T G J M C G
S S E L W A L F O P Z W O M X
L G Q F Q K X E O N M L N V B
D O C U M E N T E D S Z Z G U
```

2: Target Word Pool: Find the target words (in bold) with their exact match. Time yourself, and see how many words you can find in three minutes. In five minutes. In ten minutes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>functions</th>
<th>speculative</th>
<th>promise</th>
<th>documented</th>
<th>flawless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dredge</td>
<td>phenomenon</td>
<td>corroborated</td>
<td>triling</td>
<td>feat</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

```
speculating  functioning  document  corroborates  promised  feat  drudge
collaborates  phenomena  speculated  unflawed  triled  documentation
defats  drudgery  triling  flawless  phoneme  functional  flawed
function  functions  corroborating  defeated  speculate
unpromising  documenting  lawless  documentary  misfunction  dreg
truffle  collaborating  tride  phenomenon  defeat  promising
dredge  promise  trifle  defeated  problematic
speculation  phenomenon  defeat  promising
```

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### Pre- or Post-Comprehension

**1: Word Association:** Brainstorm words associated with today's topic for two minutes. Present to the class.

**2: Brainstorm Questions:** Brainstorm questions that you would like to ask about today's topic. Answer the questions without looking at the article.

**3: True or False?:** Guess (before the article) or answer (after the article) whether the sentence is true or false. If false, correct the sentence.

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<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Brad Williams can remember every detail of his life.</td>
<td>T / F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>Brad Williams remembers useless information, like random letters and numbers.</td>
<td>T / F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Experts agree that Williams has the best memory in the world.</td>
<td>T / F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>He thinks his ability is a burden.</td>
<td>T / F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>According to the article, everyone may one day possess the same ability.</td>
<td>T / F</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**4: Questions:** Answer the questions to check comprehension.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>What is Brad Williams's ability?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>How is his ability different than other, similar cases?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>What does his family think?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>How does the woman with a similar ability feel?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>What do some researchers believe of the ability?</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**5: Vocabulary:** In pairs/groups, remember how the words were used in today's article.

<p>| | | | | | | | | |</p>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>trifling</td>
<td>c.</td>
<td>feat</td>
<td>e.</td>
<td>dredge</td>
<td>g.</td>
<td>flawless</td>
<td>i.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>speculative</td>
<td>d.</td>
<td>documented</td>
<td>f.</td>
<td>corroborated</td>
<td>h.</td>
<td>phenomenon</td>
<td>j.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**6: Fragments:** Remember how the fragments were used, and complete the sentence from today's article.

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>Imagine possessing the ability to recall...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>He doesn't dredge useless information to the surface...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>Although the phenomenon has always been a source of entertainment to his family...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>Whenever she hears a date...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>This proves an essential element in their abilities, and some researchers...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1: Vocabulary: Circle any additional unknown words/phrases in the article. In pairs/groups, use your dictionaries to understand the meanings. Present to the class.

2: Class Questions: Read through the article once more, and write down any questions that you would like to discuss in pairs/groups or as a class. Discuss.

3: Summarize: Work with a partner to summarize the article in your own words.

4: Discuss: Talk about the following questions in pairs/groups. Remember to support your answers!

   a. Did you like this article?
   b. What was your general impression after reading this article?
   c. How good is your memory?
   d. Would you want to have a better memory? Why/not?
   e. Would you want to have the same ability as Brad Williams? Why/not?
   f. What kind of memory improving techniques do you know?
   g. How likely is it that everyone will be the same as Brad Williams one day? Please explain your answer.
   h. What is your earliest memory? Please explain.
   i. What is your clearest memory from at least ten years ago? Please explain.
   j. When people remember the same event, some details are often different. Has this happened to you?

5: Debate: After extensive research, a drug has been developed that will give people the same ability as Brad Williams. First write down some positive points, and then write down some negative points. Choose a positive (for or against the drug) and debate with a partner who has the opposite opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>positive points:</th>
<th>negative points:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6: Google Search: Type "memory" into Google news and read additional articles on this topic. Discuss or write an essay about your findings.
All Things Remembered

Imagine possessing the ability to recall the most trifling events, details, and dates of your life with near perfect accuracy. Let's say, for example, you could remember that June 15th, 1992 fell on a Monday, and you ate a hamburger with extra cheese and onions for dinner as you watched a rerun of Seinfeld. For Brad Williams, this isn't a speculative what if, but rather a feat of which he has always been capable.

There have been a number of other documented memory marvels in the past. These people could memorize random letters or numbers with ease, or recall book passages and short stories word for word. Williams is different. He doesn't dredge useless information to the surface, but rather information relevant to his past. Once corroborated with scrapbooks and diaries, his memory has proven to be nearly flawless.

"I've always been this way," he said. In fact, as a child, he thought everyone possessed the same ability. Although the phenomenon has always been a source of entertainment to his family, one expert believes Williams may be one of the best memories in the world. The doctor is presently studying Williams in the hopes of achieving a better understanding of how memory functions.

Another woman has also been found with an almost identical talent, and has joined the same study. She calls her ability a burden and not a gift, though. Whenever she hears a date, a flash of memories run through her mind. It's nonstop and exhausting.

Both Williams and the woman seem to remember better the information they find of interest. This proves an essential element in their abilities, and some researchers have concluded that many others may similarly be capable of the same skills. Since the study began, a third individual has been discovered with similar promise.
All Things Remembered

Imagine possessing the ability to recall the most (a. _______________) events, details, and dates of your life with near perfect accuracy. Let's say, for example, you could remember that June 15th, 1992 fell on a Monday, and you ate a hamburger with extra cheese and onions for dinner as you watched a rerun of Seinfeld. For Brad Williams, this isn't a (b. _______________) what if, but rather a (c. _______________) of which he has always been capable.

There have been a number of other (d. _______________) memory marvels in the past. These people could memorize (e. _______________) letters or numbers with ease, or recall book passages and short stories word for word. Williams is different. He doesn't (f. _______________) useless information to the surface, but rather information relevant to his past. Once (g. _______________) with (h. _______________) and diaries, his memory has proven to be nearly (i. _______________).

"I've always been this way," he said. In fact, as a child, he thought everyone possessed the same ability. Although the (j. _______________) has always been a source of entertainment to his family, one expert believes Williams may be one of the best memories in the world. The doctor is presently studying Williams in the hopes of achieving a better understanding of how memory (k. _______________).

Another woman has also been found with an almost (l. _______________) talent, and has joined the same study. She calls her ability a burden and not a gift, though. Whenever she hears a date, a flash of memories run through her mind. It's nonstop and (m. _______________).

Both Williams and the woman seem to remember better the information they find of interest. This proves an essential (n. _______________) in their abilities, and some researchers have concluded that many others may similarly be capable of the same skills. Since the study began, a third individual has been discovered with similar (o. _______________).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>phenomenon</th>
<th>speculative</th>
<th>random</th>
<th>element</th>
<th>promise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>documented</td>
<td>scrapbooks</td>
<td>flawless</td>
<td>dredge</td>
<td>feat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corroborated</td>
<td>functions</td>
<td>identical</td>
<td>trifling</td>
<td>exhausting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
STUDENT HANDOUT (extended listening)

Listen and fill in the missing sentences. Compare your answers with a partner, and then listen once more.

All Things Remembered

Imagine possessing the ability to recall the most trifling events, details, and dates of your life with near perfect accuracy. Let’s say, for example, you could remember that June 15th, 1992 fell on a Monday,

a) _________________________________________________________________. For Brad Williams, this isn’t a speculative what if, but rather a feat of which he has always been capable.

There have been a number of other documented memory marvels in the past. b) __________________________, or recall book passages and short stories word for word. Williams is different. He doesn’t dredge useless information to the surface, but rather information relevant to his past. Once corroborated with scrapbooks and diaries, his memory has proven to be nearly flawless.

"I’ve always been this way," he said. In fact, as a child, he thought everyone possessed the same ability. Although the phenomenon has always been a source of entertainment to his family, one expert believes Williams may be one of the best memories in the world. c) __________________________

Williams may be one of the best memories in the world. c) __________________________

d) __________________________, and has joined the same study. She calls her ability a burden and not a gift, though. Whenever she hears a date, a flash of memories run through her mind. It’s nonstop and exhausting.

e) __________________________. This proves an essential element in their abilities, and some researchers have concluded that many others may similarly be capable of the same skills. Since the study began, a third individual has been discovered with similar promise.
Vocabulary

1. Vocabulary Match:

   a. trifling  
b. speculative  
c. feat  
d. documented  
e. dredge  
f. flawless  
g. phenomenon  
h. functions  
i. promise  
j. random  
k. element  
l. identical  
m. exhausting  
n. promise  
o. flawless  
p. phenomenon  
q. functions  
r. identical  
s. identical  
t. random  
u. element

2. Fill in the Blanks:

   a. the most trifling events, details, and dates of your life with near perfect accuracy.
   b. but rather information relevant to his past.
   c. one expert believes Williams may be one of the best memories in the world.
   d. a flash of memories run through her mind.
   e. have concluded that many others may similarly be capable of the same skills.

pre- or post-Comprehension

1. True or False:

   a. T  
   b. F  
   c. F  
   d. F  
   e. T

2. Fragments:

   a. the most trifling events, details, and dates of your life with near perfect accuracy.
   b. but rather information relevant to his past.
   c. one expert believes Williams may be one of the best memories in the world.
   d. a flash of memories run through her mind.
   e. have concluded that many others may similarly be capable of the same skills.

Student Handout

1. Fill in the Blanks

   a. trifling  
b. speculative  
c. feat  
d. documented  
e. dredge  
f. flawless  
g. phenomenon  
h. functions  
i. promise  
j. random  
k. element  
l. identical  
m. exhausting  
n. promise

2. Extended Listening

   a. and you ate a hamburger with extra cheese and onions for dinner as you watched a rerun of Seinfeld
   b. These people could memorize random letters or numbers with ease
   c. The doctor is presently studying Williams in the hopes of achieving a better understanding of how memory functions
   d. Another woman has also been found with an almost identical talent
   e. Both Williams and the woman seem to remember better the information they find of interest