How to Use Some Facts about Your Brain in Order to Study Better

**PRINCIPLE:** If you read a new bit of information, your brain will remember it almost perfectly for about 15 seconds. Then you will forget it fairly rapidly.

**PRINCIPLE:** If you say a fact to yourself over and over again, you will put it into your memory very firmly. (This is not the same as re-reading it; this is saying it or writing it.)

**PRINCIPLE:** If you ask yourself a question to which the new bit of information is the right answer, and then say the new fact to yourself as the answer, you will remember well. This works better than merely repeating the answer without repeating the question, too.

How to Use These Principles When You Study

1. You should deliberately look for things you want to remember -- for an exam or for personal use.

2. When you find such a fact or idea, read it carefully so that you understand it.

3. Then stop reading, and before 15 seconds have passed, do the next four steps, (Numbers 4, 5, 6 and 7).

4. Look away from your book.

5. Ask yourself the logical question to which the fact or idea is the right answer.

6. Say the answer aloud to yourself. (Or write it down.)

7. Look back to the book to check if you got the idea or fact correct.

8. Repeat steps 4 through 7 until you get the fact right two or three times in a row.

9. When you have to learn several facts in a row or a list of things, you should only learn one or two at a time. Don't overload!

10. Finally, mark your book so that you can find the information again quickly.

11. Review the new fact later. About 24 hours later is a good time. Also review before exams.

**WARNING:** It will seem so easy to recite the answers to your questions that you will falsely think you are not learning anything. You will think you do not need to recite. But it works!

If you like this method, why not use the method right now in order to remember the important steps? Do one at a time.